

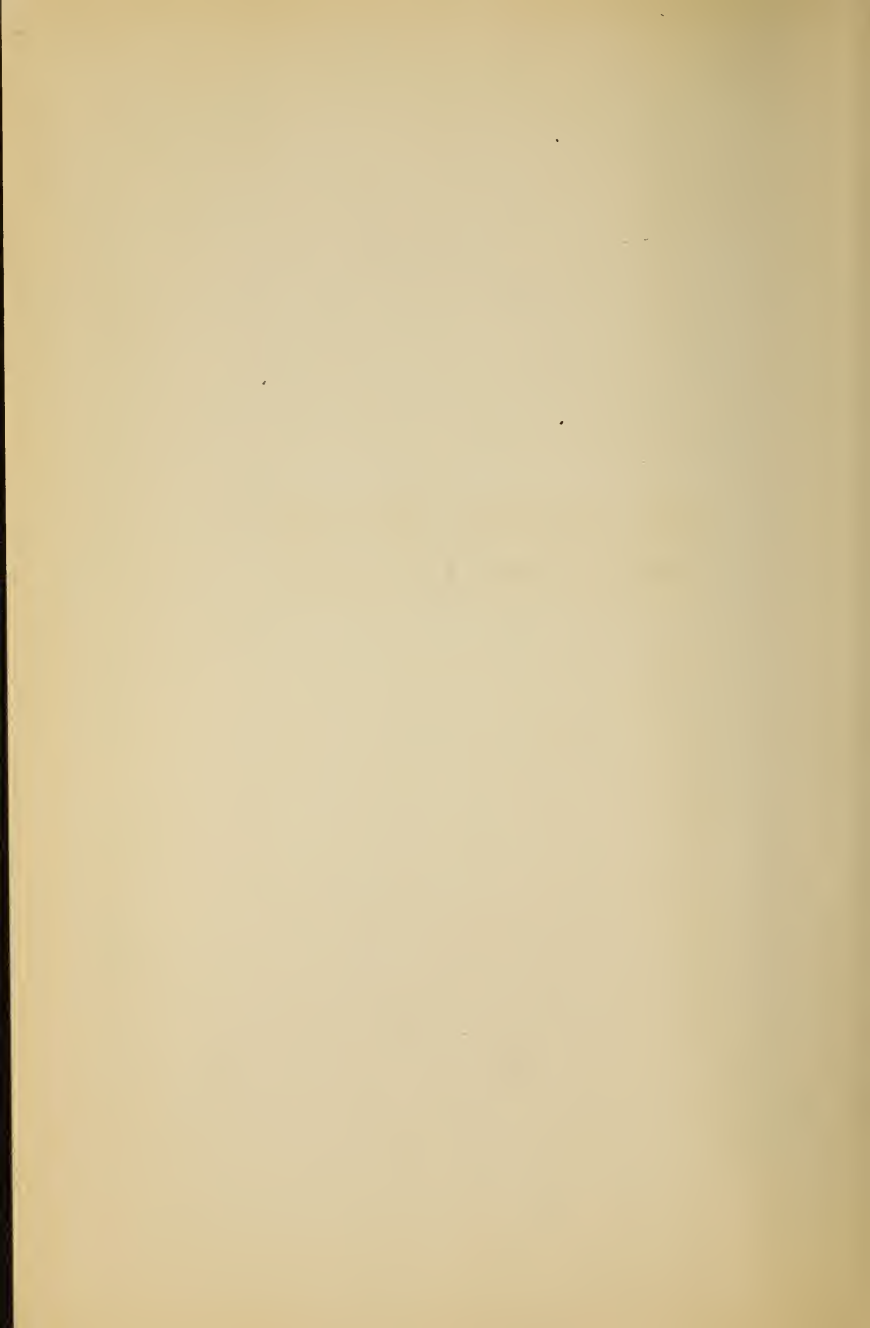


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**THE CHURCH AND THE
PROBLEMS OF TO-DAY**

Books by Rev. George P. Schmidt
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THE CHURCH AND THE PROBLEMS OF TO-DAY

CONTENTS.—Faith—The Bible—A Bureau of Standards—Hated by All—A Sign of Contradiction—Success or Failure—The Self-Starter—Too Many Irons in the Fire—False Gods—Honesty the Best Policy—Morality or Ruin? Censorship of Amusements—Small Beginnings—Doing Big Things—Community Centers—Voting Women—Wedlock Sanctified—The Bulwark of Nations—The Social Unrest—Prayer—The Fourth R—The Greatest Leader of All.

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THE CHURCH AND THE PROBLEMS OF TO-DAY

BY
REV. GEORGE T. SCHMIDT



NEW YORK, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO

BENZIGER BROTHERS

PRINTERS TO THE
HOLY APOSTOLIC SEE

PUBLISHERS OF
BENZIGER'S MAGAZINE

1921

BX 1753
.536

Nihil Obstat.

ARTHUR J. SCANLAN, S.T.D.,
Censor Librorum.

Imprimatur.

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Archbishop of New York.

NEW YORK, November 19, 1920.

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APR 12 1921

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TO
MY MOTHER AND FATHER

PREFACE

IN the midst of contradictory beliefs of every description, the world is at a loss to know what should be accepted as true. Theories are conceived, as it were, over night; long-established customs are abandoned; doctrines of unquestionable authenticity are ruthlessly overthrown,—in a word, chaos reigns in the world of thought and deed. But one institution retains the stability of centuries; and men and women of judgment hopefully turn their eyes to her, the one whom ages and changes have not altered—the Roman Catholic Church.

It is with the hope that this book may aid Catholics to remain faithful to the Church and stand by her in these difficult times, and that it may be the means of attracting the many, who are sincere in their efforts to find a trustworthy

Preface

guide through the maze of beliefs and unbeliefs, to a more thorough investigation of the Catholic Church, that it is given to press. May God prosper its mission, is the sincere wish of

THE AUTHOR.

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THE CHURCH AND THE PROBLEMS OF TODAY

CHAPTER I

FAITH

IN some respects our times may be compared to that period of contradictory beliefs that immediately preceded the coming of the Redeemer. Paganism and idolatry were rampant; and but one group of human beings remained which steadfastly clung to the truth. The Jewish race, buoyed up by the hope in the coming of a Saviour, never relinquished its belief in the One True God. But by far the majority of men were steeped in unbelief and paganism.

Is it not the same in our own day? A host of diametrically opposed beliefs are clamoring

for recognition. Men and women of the twentieth century fully realize that, in spite of modern philosophy, man demands religion, and demands a deity to whom he may flee in need, and from whom he may expect protection and assistance. This inborn yearning for the supernatural manifests itself in the potpourri of religious sects that, like a plague of locusts, infest the nations and threaten the life and growth of the tree that has sprung from the mustard seed.

The one dogma of private interpretation of the Scriptures, which was adopted some four hundred years ago, is responsible for the great number of religious denominations (shall I add, is also responsible for much unbelief and apostasy?).

But out of the past we hear the voice of One whose words bear the stamp of infallibility, "Whosoever does not believe shall be condemned." Is it possible that any belief will satisfy Him? Will the three hundred differing professions of faith be equally acceptable

to the Eternal Truth? Impossible. The holiness of God postulates that a faith to be recognized as pleasing to Him must be founded upon the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Neither can the truth accommodate itself to the times. It is unchanged and unchangeable. What was divine revelation at the time of the apostles must be true to-day.

Now a comparison of the various forms of belief of our times with the religion propounded by the apostles will reveal the incontrovertible fact that but one religion to-day is identical with the early Christian Faith, namely, the Roman Catholic Religion. We need but call attention to the doctrine of the Real Presence of the Master in the Holy Eucharist. No one can deny that Christians everywhere from the very beginning of the Christian era until the time of Luther held the Eucharist to be the Body and Blood of the Saviour, and that they considered this to be the central and pivotal doctrine of the entire Deposit of Faith. We

should seek in vain for any similar doctrine among the Protestant sects.

This fact of the prevalence of error in our day is of the greatest importance to the practical Catholic. He will associate, in his social and commercial relations, with men and women who are followers of the many branches of religious error. Not only will he hold intercourse with members of sects that have separated from the true Church; but he will have to deal with atheists, with pantheists, with the devotees of New Thought and with fellow-men influenced by every shade of modern belief and unbelief.

No one can underestimate the danger to his faith. He must, therefore, be well-grounded in Catholic belief; his faith must be as unshaken as the rock upon which it is built.

There is, for instance, the doctrine of the Trinity. Scientists will tell us that it is absolutely impossible that three distinct Persons can be so intimately united as to form one God. And our own poor intellect is far from able to

comprehend this mystery. Then again, we have the dogma of the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist. How can it be possible? According to all the laws of science the transition from one substance into another, with the new substance still retaining the appearances and qualities of the first, is an anomaly. Chemists have demonstrated that there is absolutely no analogy between the constituting elements of wine and those of blood, and consequently the transmutation or transubstantiation is out of the question.

But faith is not a science, nor a system of reasoning. It is the belief in the truthfulness of another. We do not accept the doctrine of the Trinity or of the Holy Eucharist because of any evidence that has been offered us; but solely upon the words of God who cannot deceive.

Is this faith reasonable? Most certainly it is. The child accepts the statement that a certain man is its father and a certain woman its mother. Is there any evidence? Absolutely

none. The child is certain, and yet it has no evidence. And thus in our every-day life faith comes into play and governs a majority of our actions and omissions. No one would intimate that it is unreasonable for the child to believe its parents. Only a simpleton would hesitate to drink the coffee that has been prepared for him by his wife or mother, fearing that it might contain poison. He has no evidence to the contrary; but he believes.

Now human beings may err, and may deceive others. Children have been, at times, deceived as to their parentage. And men have been poisoned by drinking coffee. But God, who has revealed to us the truths of our religion, cannot deceive and cannot err. His word is infallibly true. And when He states that there are three Persons in God, all equally God, and yet only one Deity, the same is absolutely true. Whether or not modern scientists find this belief incompatible with their deductions, makes but little difference. Whether or not our intellect can understand and grasp

this dogma will not change its reality. God has spoken; we can only say: *Credo*, I believe; strengthen Thou my unbelief.

We sometimes hear skeptics say: "What I do not see I will not believe." But faith is more than acquiescence upon conviction by evidence presented. It is the firm belief in certain truths because God, the Truth, has revealed them. And therein lies its merit. Any man can accept as true that of which he has evidence. But it requires faith to accept that which apparently contradicts our understanding.

The practical Catholic will find a host of modern beliefs and unbeliefs which appeal more to his understanding. The doctrine of evolution, which teaches the ape-descent of man, may appear reasonable upon consideration of the arguments advanced. Spiritism, with its apparent revelations from the unseen world, may play upon his credulity and superstition. New Thought may appear most fascinating. But, after all, there is no belief or

doctrine which presents to him the absolute certainty of the revelation of God as preserved by His Church. Spiritists and evolutionists have been convicted of gross deception. And the rest of present-day beliefs are nothing more than religion reduced to sentimentality. But in our Faith we have the unchanged and unchangeable, a doctrine based, not upon human reasoning or human caprice, but upon the sound bed-rock of divine revelation.

A wondrous gift of God is our Faith. It may be lost through our neglect. It has been lost by many. "Cling fast to that which thou hast, and let no man take thy crown."

CHAPTER II

THE BIBLE

THE most abused book of all times is the one which should command our deepest reverence, "the Word of God," the Holy Bible. In the name of this book crimes of every description are justified; doctrines which diametrically oppose each other are established; and the true Church is condemned while her adversary is enthroned as the only reliable guide to the wandering pilgrim.

To account for this misuse of the Holy Scriptures it will be necessary to understand the difference of opinion in both camps of Christianity regarding the Book of books.

Now the Catholic Church holds that the Bible is the Word of God, and that it is inspired and contains no errors in matters of

faith and morals. However she does not grant that it holds the entire Deposit of Faith; but contends that many of the divine revelations have come down to us by Tradition.

Let us briefly consider her reasons for this stand. In the first place, it is well to remember that the printing press is a comparatively recent invention (1440), and that, in the early centuries of the Christian era, all written matters were laboriously produced by hand. Can we imagine the enormity of the task of writing the Bible by hand? Some of the books of the New Testament were written a number of years after the birth of the Christian Church. But even if we disregard the length of time required to complete one copy of the Holy Scriptures, it would take hundreds of years to furnish enough books for the early Christian world. But what about the next fourteen hundred years before the invention of printing, when the Gospel was being carried to the furthestmost bounds of the earth, and thousands upon thousands were turning to the True

Church? A Bible here and there, perhaps one for every ten thousand Christians, could not, by any stretch of the imagination, supply the rule of faith. Oral tradition was, therefore, absolutely necessary to spread and preserve the Faith. Christ commanded His apostles, "Go teach all nations." To carry the Bible into every Christian home would have been a physical impossibility.

If the Bible was not the sole rule of faith in the early centuries, how can any one to-day declare that we must be guided in our beliefs solely by its contents?

Furthermore, it is only by Tradition that we know the authentic books of the Holy Bible. Amid innumerable apocryphal works the true and inspired books were declared in the fourth century. By following up the course of Tradition from our day to the times of the apostles we find every doctrine and every truth, not contained in the Holy Scriptures, to be handed down to us from the times of the first Christian teachers.

The very nature of the Scriptural writings demands interpretation, and therefore traditional interpretation. There are many apparent contradictions. And experience in the last four hundred years has taught us that not all understand the revelations of God alike as taken from the Scriptures. For that reason, too, the Catholic Church allows the reading of the Bible only when the version of the same is approved by her as authentic and when explanatory notes are given for the difficult passages.

Now let us view the Bible in the light of Protestantism. For all Christians who broadly belong to the class called Protestants, the Bible is the sole rule of faith. We have proved that what could not be demanded in the early centuries cannot be demanded to-day. In other words, for fourteen hundred years the Bible was almost inaccessible to the vast majority of Christians. Therefore it cannot be considered as the sole norma of our belief. But if it were true that the Scriptures alone

gave us the fullness of divine revelation, it would surely be required that the Church of God interpret the Sacred Writings infallibly so that the world could not be mistaken in its understanding of the Word of God. And thus we come to the weakest point in Protestantism, and the worthlessness of the Bible as their guide. For Protestants allow private interpretation of the Scriptures. They have no infallible teaching authority that clears away the doubts and sheds light upon the darkness. Every one is his own judge and interpreter. And the consequence? The existence of between two and three hundred different sects of Protestantism is the sad result. And there is no reason why another century will not find four hundred new sects and denominations.

Added to this, the carelessness with which translations of the Scriptures are rendered, and the disregard for words and their original meanings have made the modern version of the Bible anything but a reliable guide to the

seeker of truth. Martin Luther felt no hesitancy in dropping important words and whole books from the Sacred Writings, and interpolating words to suit his personal doctrines. His disciples have faithfully supported him in his deceit.

Such is the effect of private judgment. Even the learned Doctors of the Church who consecrated their lives to the study of the written Word of God, confess that it is replete with difficulties. The mere translation from the original languages to modern tongues brings with it a host of grammatical and idiomatical obstacles that cannot but make the interpretation of the revelations contained, liable to the grossest errors. We see here clearly the need of an infallible teaching authority. In whom else would this authority be vested if not in the True Church of God?

“We must, therefore, conclude,” says Cardinal Gibbons in the “Faith Of Our Fathers” (Page 86), “that the Scriptures *alone* cannot be a sufficient guide and rule of faith because

they cannot, at any time, be within the reach of every inquirer; because they are not of themselves clear and intelligible even in matters of the highest importance, and because they do not contain all the truths necessary to salvation."

The fundamental difference of opinion between Catholics and Protestants on the most important book that was ever written, has given rise to much speculation on the possibility of a reunion of all Christian confessions in the One True Fold. Such unity will be impossible as long as private interpretation of the Bible remains a Protestant dogma. One most important step must be taken to give us "one fold and one shepherd," and that step must be the recognition of a supreme authority that is empowered by God to explain His written Word. The acceptance of Tradition as a vehicle bearing many truths of divine revelation would be but a natural sequel to this first, and most important, move for church unity.

As for unity among the Protestant bodies,

as long as private interpretation is in force, it is an unknown quantity. Men who are to be considered as reliable guides directing pilgrims on the way to heaven, are constantly quarreling amongst themselves as to which is the right path and as to what are the essential requisites for admission to eternal glory. A chaos of religious beliefs and doctrines confronts the sincere seeker of truth, and from these he has the liberty to choose what appeals to him most. Must he not be filled with disgust at the sight of the numerous contradictions that are presented to him as divine revelation? Can we still wonder at the sad fact that three-fifths of the population of America are non-church-going?

Far be it from me to give the impression that the Catholic Church is not the champion of the Bible. Was she not the sole custodian of the Sacred Word for fifteen centuries? And does she not, in our own day, seek out men of brilliant intellect and long years of study to watch over the Holy Writings in order that not even

the least semblance of error creeps into them? The Biblical Institute in Rome, under the direction of the best talent the Church can command, has its being and existence for the one and only purpose, viz.: to maintain the integrity of the Holy Scriptures and to teach their true interpretation.

But while the Church considers Holy Writ a most sacred treasure to be guarded jealously against all innovations and interpolations, she would break the chain that binds her in apostolic unity if she would declare the Bible the sole rule of faith; she would contradict the mandate of Christ to *preach* and *teach*; she would cease to be the unerring guide, for she would be compelled to abandon sacraments and beliefs that were entrusted to her during the great Forty Days after the Resurrection. In a word, the Church would no longer be "the ground and pillar of truth," but would have become a human institution distinctly separated from the glorious organization that was founded by the Master to bring redemption to mankind.

CHAPTER III

A BUREAU OF STANDARDS

WHAT a Babel of confusion would reign in our cities if there were no fixed standards of measurement! When we speak of inches, yards, pecks or bushels a definite measurement or quantity is recognized. But imagine, if you can, the utter bewilderment that must needs prevail if every architect and contractor formulated a system of measurement all his own, and if the merchants compelled us to become familiar with an hundred and one methods of parceling their merchandise. To avoid this confusion the nation maintains a bureau of standards, and throughout the country the system of ascertaining size, capacity, or dimensions is the same. No method of weighing, measuring quantities and distances, is correct unless it conforms to the

standard fixed by the nation. It will be apparent that a bureau of standards is indispensable in a well-regulated government.

But if certain standards of determining quantities and distances are necessary to insure commercial honesty, what must be the confusion in a nation's religious life if there are no fixed principles of morality and tenets of belief? The mooted questions that perplex the minds of thinking men give rise to a host of divergent opinions. And in spite of much study, the examination of statistics and endless debates, we find that men cannot and will not agree on these subjects.

There is that great scandal of American public life, the easy divorce. The facility with which the sacred bonds of matrimony may be severed in America is a revelation even to Pagans. But if the stranger who comes to our shores should ask: "What is the nation's stand on divorce? What do the people at large think of the question?"—which of us could give an intelligent answer? In a recent

contest conducted by one of our daily newspapers, the readers were invited to give their views on the divorce question in an essay of not more than two hundred words. Every thinkable reason was brought forward as the writers' conception of the cause of divorce; and everything from trial marriages to absolute indissolubility was advocated as a remedy. Evidently there is no consensus of opinion upon this question. But is it not of the utmost importance that there be a standard of morality according to which the citizens must regulate their lives?

But you will say, a uniform standard of morality imposed upon the people by the government, is out of the question in a country which grants equal rights to all forms of religion. Precisely. And therefore there is all the more reason that the Church should maintain a bureau of standards, so that her people may at all times and in all places be guided aright in the search for truth and the endeavor to live righteously. But this would postulate

infallibility on the part of the Church. Exactly. We claim no less for the True Church of God, that is, in matters that pertain to faith and morals.

Let us understand the reasonableness of the contention that the Church is infallible, and consequently our safest guide on the road to heaven. What do we understand by "infallible"? Mark well, the Church lays no claim to infallibility in dealing with questions that are purely economical or of social or political importance alone. The Holy Father or the assembled bishops might, for instance, after much study and mature deliberation pass judgment upon the practicability of the League of Nations. Yet no Catholic would maintain that such a decision would be infallible. Aside from the fact that we could expect accuracy and conscientiousness from the Holy Father or the assembled bishops, the question belongs to the realm of politics.

But in interpreting the law of God and divine revelation, the Church is infallible. You

do not find a difference of opinion among Catholics on the subject of divorce, or on the legality of race-suicide, or on the divinity of the Saviour. Should a doubt arise at any time on matters of faith or morals the Catholic at once refers to his Bureau of Standards—the Church. But is this not a slavish submission of one's intellect and free-will? Not at all. Rather it is a safeguard against the errors to which the intellect is prone, and against the folly begot by the abuse of free-will. We hear so much of the freedom of science and freedom of thought. What nonsense to call that freedom which plunges one into error and deception! As well might the merchant protest that his liberty is being restricted because the state determines the size of his peck-measure.

But has the Church the right to claim infallibility? Is her Bureau of Standards approved by God? Let us use our God-given common sense and solve the question without reference to Revelation.

What is the purpose of the Church of God?

What mission has she upon earth? Manifestly the Church is a divine institution whose primary purpose is to bring the fruits of Redemption to mankind. The Church is here not to amuse us of a Sunday, not to care for our bodily welfare alone; but her mission is to lead us to God. Well, then, can it be possible that the All-holy God would entrust so great a work to a guide who might lead us astray, who might seek out the easy paths, or who might not even know the way to heaven? The Church was placed upon earth to be our guide, to teach us the Way, the Truth and the Life. Our reason demands that she be a reliable, safe and infallible guide.

Some one will say, we have the word of God recorded in the Bible. That is our infallible guide. The four hundred years of Protestantism have shown us just how reliable the Bible is as a guide when placed in the hands of the people for their own private interpretation. The hundreds of sects into which Protestantism has been divided give proof sufficient that

the Bible, too, must have an infallible interpreter.

Needless to say, the fact that only the Roman Catholic Church lays claim to and exercises the infallible teaching authority, which of necessity must be vested in the True Church of God, is a beacon to the seekers of truth.

As we look over the memoirs of the great men and women who have abandoned false beliefs to embrace the Catholic religion, we are brought face to face with the marvelous truth that what was the greatest bugaboo in the days of their indecision, became the sweetest consolation after their conversion, namely, the infallibility of the Church. Where formerly they had debated on questions of faith and morals only to arrive at unsatisfactory conclusions, they now could refer to the "Bureau of Standards," knowing that no matter what the teaching of the Church, it was vouched for by God. *Roma locuta, causa finita.*

Such must be the teaching authority of a church that has been guaranteed divine assist-

ance and the guidance of the Holy Ghost. A religion that can not give us an infallible interpretation of the teaching of God, can not be looked upon as a leader. It misleads.

CHAPTER IV

HATED BY ALL

A WALL of adamant separates the Catholic from his fellow-men. It is the wall of hatred. This bitter animosity is apparent everywhere. In commerce, in politics, in society—always the same question is asked, Is he a Catholic? Race and color have long since ceased to be obstacles in the path of success where the Catholic Faith is still the mark that brands the man as undesirable.

Secret societies abound throughout the world with the one avowed purpose of breaking the hold of the Church of Rome on the millions of her adherents. No other organization, religious or otherwise, has to battle so valiantly for existence as does the Spouse of Christ.

Men and women, of more than ordinary abil-

ity, are laying down their lives, bending every effort, straining every nerve—and for what? To vent their spleen upon the Unsullied by spreading foul calumnies and dastardly lies about her. But what can be their motive in seeking the ruination and destruction of the Church? What else can be the motive than the thirst for revenge on the part of Lucifer, who skillfully employs men and women as his infernal tools?

The Church tells mankind the truth. But the truth sometimes contradicts man's own desires and always opposes the plans of hell.

When Christ, who could challenge the world, "Which of you can convince me of sin?" told the Jews the truth, they rose against Him and threatened to stone Him to death. And when, subsequently, He stood before the palace of Pilate, His innocence and sinlessness confessed and acknowledged before the world, the howling mob demanded His blood. Why? Because He was innocent? No; because He stood there as the representative of truth. His

apostles went forth into the world and preached the truth. They feared neither emperor nor executioner. Their fate was martyrdom. And thus it has been throughout the ages unto our present day.

Henry VIII was told the truth concerning the indissolubility of the marriage bond; the truth cost the Church a kingdom. And what is the stand of the Church to-day? She alone champions the side of truth in the matter of obeying the commandments of God. She condemns divorce as immoral and adulterous and by one hundred thousand divorcees' throats her life and her blood is demanded.

She insists on the right of parents to educate, not only the mind, but also the heart, of their children by instilling, in early youth, the fear of God and the love of virtue. What is the comment of the world? The Catholic Church is unpatriotic and is undermining the government of nations for her own selfish ends.

In a thousand convents and monasteries the divine counsels of the Master are observed. In

a thousand convents and monasteries the sins of the world are atoned for by pure, virtuous lives of self-sacrifice. And the judgment of the enemy evidences itself in an outpour of vituperation and calumny.

Fearlessly and without thought of the consequences, the Church condemns and decries the lasciviousness of modern amusements, the seduction of the dance halls and theaters, the dishonesty in business, the unscrupulous methods employed in government, the criminal toleration of the dens of vice where disease is bred and young blood infected—and to all this she hears the unanimous response of the worldlings: The Catholic Church is but a remnant of the Dark Ages; she is behind the times.

Laws are made to stifle her existence; secret conclaves plot her destruction; open warfare is waged from every angle. And this worldwide, perpetual persecution—what has it accomplished? If anything, just as the mighty oak grows stronger and more deeply rooted when buffeted by the tempests, so the Church

has grown in power, grown tremendously in numbers, grown amazingly in authority. And to-day, in spite of the forces that plot her ruination, she stands out as the only institution whose future is guaranteed. She has seen empires crumble in the dust and republics torn asunder and has watched while new governments arose from the ashes of the old. No kingdom, no empire, no republic, has half her strength or one tenth of her promise for future greatness and stability.

But this uninterrupted thriving amid so many adverse conditions must carry its unmistakable lesson to the many seekers of truth. No human organization could withstand the onslaughts of hatred and persecution that she has endured. Because she is not human but divine, and sustained by the power of Omnipotence, she continues to be the infallible interpreter of God's truth.

This fact will compensate in no small measure for the hardships and annoyance that the Catholic must suffer because of his Faith.

Two mighty armies are arrayed in battle, on the one side Christ and His followers, on the other Satan and his subjects. It is the battle between Heaven and hell, between Light and darkness, between Truth and falsehood. Christ will win; His victory is inevitable. The victorious warriors will be crowned in the realms of heaven; the vanquished will pine in hell.

As Catholics, we are the chosen warriors under the banner of Christ. Allegiance and fidelity to that banner mean victory; infidelity and desertion spell defeat. Which will it be?

CHAPTER V

A SIGN OF CONTRADICTION

WHEN Simeon, the seer, some nineteen hundred years ago took a little infant in his arms and made the remarkable statement, "Behold this child is set for the fall and resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted," a bystander might have ridiculed the thought that the child of apparently unknown parents could ever rise to such heights as to be the occasion of the success and failure, the rise and fall of individuals as well as of nations. And yet this Child, the Son of God, has been a sign of contradiction, and has exerted a tremendous influence upon the nations of the world and their destinies.

The glad tidings of His birth made known to the shepherds on the hillsides of Bethlehem

had hardly penetrated into the homes and hearts of the Jewish people when it came to pass that He was to be contradicted. We find that He became an object of hatred in the eyes of Herod, and innocent blood was shed in a brutal endeavor to terminate His earthly career.

As He appeared in public to make known to mankind the nature of His mission, He met with the bitter opposition of the priests and Pharisees of His time. It was not long before these same enemies rejoiced to see Him nailed to a cross, bleeding from an hundred wounds.

With the glorious resurrection of the Saviour, the truthfulness of His assertion that He was the Son of God was firmly established. Surely the peoples of the world will flock to the Holy City to be received into that community established by Him to bring redemption to mankind. But, alas, what do we see in reality? His messengers carry their tidings of peace and joy before the people—and for their pains they are cast into vile dungeons;

they are scourged and beaten; they are subjected to most horrible tortures, only to end in martyrdom.

In the hearts of the Roman emperors a diabolical ingenuity unfolds itself, to produce new and unheard-of instruments and methods of torture, to contradict Him who proclaimed Himself the Saviour of mankind. Blood, innocent blood, saturates the soil of Rome and Palestine.

And as one by one the pages of history are turned, we find that the Blessed Redeemer of the world has never ceased to be a sign that is contradicted. Nation has hurled itself against nation in a vain endeavor to forever put an end to His great influence over the destinies of peoples.

In our own day, in this enlightened age of ours, is Christ not a sign that is contradicted by the vast majority of human beings? We need not go to the far-off pagan lands whose people have been reared in ignorance and superstition. Right at home, in our own coun-

try, His divinity has been denied; His mission ridiculed; His influence despised; His followers bitterly persecuted. The secret societies seek to displace His religion by substituting a form of natural religion, and by calling upon every power at their command, social, economical, and political, to dethrone Him and once again place Reason upon our altars. Even those who call themselves Christians, are allied with the forces of evil to break the power of the Church of God over its millions of adherents.

If we seek for anything different among the other progressive nations we are doomed to disappointment. England, France, Germany and Italy, as nations, openly or covertly have declared their contradiction to the principles of Christ and His Church.

But mark well, Christ was to be not only “a sign which shall be contradicted” but also “for the rise and fall of many.” The man or woman who accepts Christ’s religion and lives according to His mandates is blessed with peace and hap-

piness and the hope of unending bliss to come. But just as soon as they forsake God, their hearts no longer experience that sweet peace that comes to the elect, but instead the vices, hate, jealousy, and anger are enkindled in their hearts. They become bitter and resentful. Their fall is hastened through the years, until it ends in the abyss of hell.

And the nations—how wonderfully they rise to splendid heights of glory when they know how to pray to God for His blessing upon their people and their lands. But how they plunge and are cast down to wretched unhappiness when they forsake their God.

England, glorious old England, was led to apostasy by a royal lecher. And to-day even her most loyal subjects fear the impending dismemberment of the empire. Italy has dared to commit sacrilege upon the person of the Vicar of Christ, and her most sanguine supporters see the crumbling of her throne. Germany who opened wide the doors of her uni-

versities to the enemies of Christianity, and fostered and favored the insane deductions of conceited philosophers, to-day lies humbled in the dust. France, at one time the flower of Christendom, has idly looked on as the enemies of Christianity gathered their forces to extinguish the lights of heaven and drive Christ over her borders. And as we write we can not but feel sorry for France in her peculiar predicament. Abandoned by her allies, she faces a giant, who indeed has been stunned by a heavy blow dealt with the combined force of the nations, but who is far from dead.

We had dreamed sweet dreams of a reign of peace when war would be impossible. But can we look for peace when whole nations have deliberately and maliciously contradicted and denied the Prince of Peace? Can we expect an abandonment of the jealousies and national animosities that lie at the root of all wars when we, regardless of the consequences, have driven Him out of our councils and out of our deliber-

ations who alone can apply the healing balm of charity and forgiveness upon the aching, bleeding wounds of society?

Philosophers, statesmen, and military experts may give us their views on the causes of war and the dissatisfaction of peoples, but in the end we shall be forced to admit that the Hand of God lies heavily upon the nations; that there can be no lasting peace and prosperity until human beings cease to contradict the Ruler of Nations.

CHAPTER VI

SUCCESS OR FAILURE

SUCCESS is the magic word that, from time immemorial, has lured the youth of every land from home and fireside, and has led the sons and daughters of every nation to unknown cities and to unexplored regions. In the quest of success no thought is given to the hardships involved. The vision of the future, when the ambitious will look down from the pinnacle of fame upon the past with its difficulties and sacrifices, seems to lend energy and determination to their efforts.

Not a few attain success, but at the cost of much privation. Frequently the ties of love that hold men fast to their native hearths have to be broken. Loved ones are left behind; new acquaintances and friends must be won.

Added to these are the hardships of a beginner in a strange land. Such is the price of success.

If success, from a worldly point of view, is to be bought only by sacrifice and labor, then surely, in the most important task of our lives, it will not be less dearly purchased. Our task, and indeed the most important task of our existence, is to realize the object for which we have been created. The attainment of that object, namely, the winning of eternal happiness in heaven, is success. To lose our right to heaven is failure. Even the poorest philosopher will admit that a thing is successful only in so far as it performs the task for which it has been made. Men do not purchase automobiles for mere beauty of appearance. They require performance. The most expensive motor car is a failure if it does not attain the speed and carrying power of the cheapest vehicle of this kind. Beautiful upholstery, shining brass and nickel will not lessen the degree of failure if the engine is worthless.

Well then, how can man be counted a success in life if he fails to accomplish that for which he has been created? He may prove to be a great financier; he may stand high in political circles; he may be able to manage a great chain of stores. But that is not what he was made for. His first and most important business is to save his immortal soul. If he does not accomplish this task he is a failure. His other attainments may be laudable but they are accidentals, just as the upholstery and expensive ornamentation of the limousine.

But success in our life's most important task is not to be attained without privation and hardships. There is, first of all, the great difficulty of working in a strange land. For, after all, the Catholic is a stranger in the world. The unbelief and materialism, so prevalent in our times, have nothing in common with his belief. He must deal with men and women to whom honesty and justice are mere ethical virtues, to be discarded when they interfere with business. He is compelled to witness fellow-

men, of no greater ability than his own, forge ahead and become his leaders, while he is held back by the dictates of his conscience and by his religion, which tolerates no fraudulent means for gaining wealth and fame.

Then again, the world, this bountiful provider of luxuries, throws widely open the doors of her palaces of pleasure and license. With the honeyed words and the sweet voice of the siren she bids men and women to fling aside the cares and worries that burden them, and quench the thirst of passion from the flowing bowl of gratification. The Catholic, too, hears the siren's call; he, too, feels himself drawn to sin and to sensuality. But if he would succeed in life, he must bring the sacrifice and must contradict his own evil inclinations. His slogan must be "Excelsior".

But is success worth the price? Is it worth while to constantly deny ourselves in the hope of a greater happiness to come? It most certainly is the greatest wisdom to decline the

world's happiness in order to gain the beatitude of heaven. For does the world really give happiness? Do her pleasures take away the burden of life's daily battle? Not at all. Her pleasures are but transitory; they pass over us like a pleasant dream from which we are awakened to the stern reality of labor, hunger, pain, sickness and death.

But the happiness of heaven is, first of all, unending. It leaves no memory of a past of pain and suffering; it threatens no future of a return to former trials. It completely satisfies the yearning of the human heart. Best of all, it is ours if we want it.

True, the human heart grows weary of sacrifices and privations for the sake of a heaven which we have never seen. It costs a mighty battle to forego the pleasures that sin offers us in order to attain a happiness which virtue promises. But there is, absolutely, no element of doubt connected with virtue's promise. The Living God, whose word cannot deceive, has

declared that there are many mansions in the heavenly realms prepared for those who do His bidding.

Nor shall we be compelled to wait long for the day of success. A few years, and the little cross or marker in the cemetery will announce to posterity that we once lived upon earth and that our bodies have returned to dust. What then will be our opinion of success or failure? Will it be too late? Shall we be classed among the failures who could not accomplish that for which they were made?

The words of Our Saviour, "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul?" give us the infallible criterion of success and failure. Palaces and gardens, wealth and honor do not measure success; they may be the signals of failure. In like manner poverty, want, and even destitution are not indications of failure. The poorest of the poor may be eminently successful in the greatest task of his life. Indeed, some of the most successful men and women, the Saints,

have voluntarily taken poverty upon themselves in order not to be hampered by worldly things.

Both riches and poverty may be a means toward our end. By using the one judiciously and for the honor of God, and by bearing the other in the spirit of resignation to God's holy will, great strides toward the coveted goal are made.

Since, then, true success is attained only by saving our immortal souls, we must make every other endeavor and enterprise subservient to this end. Nothing may interfere; nothing else should hinder us. In our business, on our walks, in our recreation, even when seeking amusement, we must ever be reminded that "we have no lasting dwelling here," that we are created for higher things, that we shall be successful only if we insure our eternal happiness in heaven.

CHAPTER VII

THE SELF-STARTER

SOME years ago the congregation of which the author is pastor, was given a spiritual treat in the guise of a sermon delivered by an old college chum. His text was, "Be a Self-Starter". I crave his indulgence if I borrow his idea for the following lines.

Many Catholics, who by their own fault or by misfortune are not able to make any headway in their business pursuits, who are always comparing the month's income with the bills for the same thirty days, seem to harbor the thought that when once their income exceeds their expenditures, they will "do something for the Church". But have you observed that this happy moment never seems to arrive? What is the reason? Is it possible that God's blessing does not rest upon their work?

It has come to be a recognized fact that where sacrifices are brought, where people are willing to deprive themselves of small luxuries in order to pay their just debts to God, the little sacrifice is rewarded a hundred fold.

Here is a fact that came under the author's observation a few years ago. A lad of fourteen years desired to be a priest, and made known his desire to his father. The latter, although a business man, was struggling under a heavy debt. However, he trusted in God and gave his consent to finance the education of his son. In round numbers it cost the father just \$5,000 until the happy day dawned when his child, as God's anointed, ascended the altar for the first time. But what about the financial condition of the father? Was he overwhelmed with debt? By no means; the debt was paid, and on the day of the son's first Mass, the father knew that he was worth no less than \$20,000.

This gives us the key to the present chapter: "Be a self-starter." No matter how poor you

are, no matter what your financial condition may be, do something, as much as possible, for God's Church. Those who wait until they become rich, have a long time to wait, for they never attain their goal.

I was moved to pity a short time ago when the only son of a widow left her alone on the farm, while he sought his fortune in the city. Now a woman on a farm alone has small prospects of great success. However, my pity changed to astonishment when the widow came to me to give donations in lieu of the work her son might have otherwise rendered. I remonstrated with her, and refused to accept her donations. She had her way. But note the remarkable sequel. When the year was past, she had done better than in any previous year. God never allows Himself to be outdone in generosity.

In his sermon, our friend suggested that a man embarking upon a business venture without funds, should borrow money and donate it to the Church. This seems to be the extremity

of generosity. And yet, do you honestly believe that such a man would fail? Or rather do you not imagine that his every effort would be crowned with success, that his labors would bear abundant fruit, that, in short, God would be with him?

And after all, that is the lesson that the saints teach us. Take, for instance, the example of St. Francis of Assisi. Born of wealthy parents, and heir to a fortune, he turns over his riches to the poor, and dons the somber habit of penance and poverty. True, his wealth in gold and silver did not increase—for he despised such riches. But what can the world offer in gold and silver that could compare with the crown of glory won by St. Francis?

It is remarkable how much a man will deprive himself of, for the sake of some trifling gratification. There is the daily cigar. Many men are known to smoke as high as ten cigars a day, all of which are priced from five to fifteen cents apiece. It is their luxury. No

matter how business is going, no matter how much debt rests on the homestead, the cigars must be had. A little mathematical calculation will reveal the fact that dollars are expended weekly for this luxury. Of course, there is no objection. But the same individual who gives out dollars weekly for such unnecessary items, is sure to search his purse for the smallest coin when he goes to Mass on Sundays. Is God to be compared to a beggar, that we give the least we can offer with dignity to the maintenance and support of His Church?

There is another noteworthy feature of the self-starter. You need but turn on the ignition, press a button and the motor is set in motion. How much easier than the slow, tiresome task of cranking the engine! But alas, a great many Catholics are not equipped with self-starters. It is necessary to crank and crank and repeat the operation time and again before the motor begins to work.

An instance is the call for help from the Catholic missions. Protestants are respond-

ing nobly to the appeals for millions to be devoted to home and foreign missions. In fact so great is the ardor of Protestants for the missions, and so enormous are their contributions, that in many pagan countries the Protestant religion is acknowledged to be the religion of America. Is there any plausible reason why we Catholics lag far behind our non-Catholic brethren in support of the missions? Is it possible that they have greater faith? Is it possible that they are willing to bring greater sacrifices for the spread of Protestantism, than we are willing to bring to make the True Church known everywhere?

The same zeal is noted in the support of the Y. M. C. A. Millions are contributed annually for the support and maintenance of this organization. The time is not far off when Catholics will be compelled to maintain similar clubs for our young men and young women in order to save them for the Church. But then the slow, tiresome operation of cranking the motor will be out of date; it will be necessary to

have self-starters among our Catholics, and in great numbers.

At various times the attempt has been made to establish Catholic clubs in our cities. Some ventures have succeeded; others have failed. The failures were due solely to lack of support. Why? Because there were no self-starters in the respective communities.

But in the future such efforts must not fail. Catholic clubs for men and women must be organized and must offer our Catholic youth the same advantages as the Y. M. C. A. Otherwise we may look for wholesale loss of faith and apostasy.

The old truth always recurs, the world, and what the world offers young men and women, is calculated to rob them of faith and plunge them into the maelstrom of unbelief and materialism. Not one endeavor outside the Church is intended to foster Catholic belief and practice. Rather everything tends toward unbelief and materialism.

The need is, therefore, all the greater for

Catholics to look to their own interests, and chief among these is the spiritual welfare of their Catholic youth. Save the boys and girls for the Church, and her perpetuity is guaranteed.

CHAPTER VIII

TOO MANY IRONS IN THE FIRE

EVERY good housekeeper knows that when many pots are boiling on the stove, the one or the other is apt to boil down and the contents be ruined by burning. In like manner, too many irons in the blacksmith's fire give him more work than he can reasonably handle. Thus also, many Catholics are interested in a host of enterprises, but least of all concerned about the welfare of their souls. Business before religion is the slogan of to-day. And alas, it has been adopted by not a few who consider themselves God-fearing.

The pastor of a congregation loses no opportunity to urge his people to frequently receive Holy Communion. Are his efforts attended with success? To a certain degree they

are. But always he hears the same excuse, "I am too busy to go to confession on Saturday, and Sunday morning the time is too short and the number of penitents too great." But why is he too busy on Saturday? Is it perhaps because he has too many irons in the fire? Certainly, the nature of some forms of business demands the owner's constant attention on Saturdays. But it is equally certain that by far the majority of Catholics have time in abundance to go to confession and Holy Communion weekly or at least every month.

Then we have the man of wealth who fails to contribute his share to good causes. Is it not a fact that the poor and those in moderate circumstances are most generous to the Church? Why do we so seldom hear of substantial donations by wealthy Catholics to the support of our charitable and educational enterprises? It is to be feared that wealth has made them forgetful of their obligations to God, the Giver of all things. But in many cases it will be an instance of too many irons in the fire. No

amount of wealth satisfies the human heart. There is always the yearning for more. Consequently, large investments are placed; every cent is made to labor for more; and thus, even the wealthy sometimes have but limited funds at their immediate disposal. And who would ever think of selling a valuable bond or a block of stocks to make a donation to some church or charitable institution! Wealth warps the hearts of men.

Having an interest in so many varied endeavors, naturally the most neglected of our affairs will suffer immeasurably. Now, sad as it may seem, religion is usually the one affair that is neglected. It is apparently considered a "side-issue" in the lives of men. But in reality the service of God is the most important task assigned to us. For this reason more time, more energy and more money should be expended upon the promotion of religious undertakings than upon any other business. The soul is more than the body. Long after this pampered shell of ours will have decayed in its

grave, the immortal spirit that gives it life will continue to exist. Consequently, everything that interferes with the soul's realization of its end is superfluous in our lives. "You cannot serve God and Mammon" was the warning sounded years ago. It echoes through the ages as the truest word ever spoken. Every man must labor to live. But there is absolutely no need of wealth. Magnificent palaces and lovely gardens will not satiate the soul's hunger for happiness. There is only one thing that will still the longing that burns in every human breast; it is complete happiness with God. To attain this happiness it is necessary to serve God. It is the first, the most important, the only task that has been set before us. How pitiful is the sight of the man or woman who labors from morn to night, day after day, to acquire wealth! What folly to lavish all our energy and to expend all our time in the pursuit of that which we cannot hold!

But let us view the danger of too many irons from another angle. We find that often pa-

rental duties are neglected because of the many obligations arising from social affiliations. The club harbors many fathers and mothers more frequently than the home. Children are given over to the care of nurses and housemaids. The father or mother finds it simply impossible to attend to the education and instruction of the children. There is the bridge-club at Mrs. So-and-So's and the lodge or poker club at Smith's. Then the 'Commercial Club has its weekly meeting, while the Chamber of Commerce and the Automobile Association must be attended regularly. Of course, the theater and the concert demand an evening. But what about those little boys and girls at home whose tender years cry out for the love of a mother and the care of a father? Too many irons in the fire! The rearing of children is of far greater importance than the social or commercial club.

Queen Victoria of Spain has a host of social duties that make great demands on her time. But have you observed that this lovely queen,

who is perhaps one of the most photographed of women, is rarely seen except in the company of her children? Catholic mothers and fathers might take an example from this convert.

All that has been said in this chapter may be reduced to the one thought: Religion is more important than business or social success. Behold the captain of industry. A certain number of hours are given over every day to his business. During these hours of work nothing else is allowed to interfere. But is business, even the most successful, half as important as the salvation of a human soul? All the commerce in the world might have gone to ruin before God would have sent His Son to save it. But He did send a Redeemer to save human souls. No price was too great, for He paid the highest possible ransom.

If then the soul is of such value, if its salvation is of paramount importance, the least that reasonable men and women should do, is to give the soul equal attention with worldly busi-

ness. Nothing, not even the opportunity of acquiring wealth, should interfere with our religious duties.

The fiend of hell is past-master in the art of seduction. His schemes for the ruination of souls are countless. Without a doubt, he is the agitator who has suggested the hundred and one different forms of diversion and amusement that draw human beings away from the great task of saving their souls. If he can interest them in many other matters, he knows that religion will suffer, and consequently great numbers of immortal spirits will plunge down into hell. It is our task to combat this arch-enemy of the human race. We can do so most effectively by refusing to interest ourselves in each and every form of distraction, by not putting too many irons in the fire.

CHAPTER IX

FALSE GODS

TRY as he will, man can not rid himself of the deeply-rooted conviction that a Supreme Being rules his destinies, and that within his mortal shell there dwells a spirit that can not die. Even the greatest scientists, men and women of keen intellectual attainments, refuse to go long without risking a guess at the probability of an unseen world inhabited by the discarnate souls of men. They are even attempting to perfect scientific instruments to communicate with the dead. What a holiday old Lucifer will have when man first attempts to receive messages from the spirit world by means of scientific instruments!

By means of spiritism Satan has induced untold numbers of believers and unbelievers to

bend their knee before his satanic majesty. However, he has tried the scheme before. Spiritism is nothing new; it will soon be a neglected fad, unless another war arouses the curiosity of those who would fain look behind the curtains of eternity.

But Satan's list of false gods is far from exhausted. He knows how to approach each individual according to his prejudices. There is the false god of heresy, which seems to satisfy the yearning of many human souls for closer communication with the Most High. For those of a Protestant turn of mind, there are countless sects that offer little more than protest against the true Church. Their contempt for "the idolatry of the Mass" and "sacramental superstitions", must appease the most Protestant heart. Should there be others who cling to the "Catholic" name, and fondly believe themselves to be united to the apostolic succession, a form of Mass is suggested, as in the High Church. To Satan it makes but little difference what one believes, as long as

the Roman Catholic Church is devoutly hated. The attachment of Anglicans, for instance, to their faith, whether it be "Catholic" or Protestant, is so strong that even in the face of conviction of its errors they can, only with difficulty, tear themselves from its embrace. Even a man of the caliber of Bishop Kinsman fought to the last ditch to keep his hold on the faith which he learned to know to be counterfeit. When strong men fight such battles to master their own souls, what must be the holocaust of weak victims offered up to the Wrecker of Souls.

In olden times a host of stone gods and goddesses satisfied the craving of the human heart for intimacy with divinity. Those days have passed. A new system of deception had to be introduced, else the nations would crowd the altars of the One True God. There is no Aaron to fashion a golden calf for those who demand a deity—and in all likelihood there would be few to bend their knee before the idol. But gold has always had a peculiar at-

traction for human beings. Accordingly, Satan has deified it. Riches, honors, and luxury are placed before our eyes as the greatest good that man can attain. But do men adore wealth? Look how they sacrifice health and strength for its attainment. No sacrifice is too big, no risk too great, no danger too appalling. Conscience, virtue, honor and love are thrown to the winds. There is no abatement, no respite in the mad race, until the worshiper kneels before the throne of his god, a pile of gold. Was there ever a form of idolatry that wrought such havoc with the belief in the One True God as the lust for gold? Was there ever a form of heresy or false religion which made man so abject a slave to his spurious deity?

But if we could look down into the maw of hell and see there the great numbers of those who preferred a false god to the living Master of heaven and earth, we should probably discover that the greatest number of these un-

fortunates were lost because they adored the god of lust,

“A monster of so frightful mien
As to be hated needs but to be seen.”

“Thou shalt not have false gods before Me” was thundered down from Mount Sinai. Are we so simple as to believe that this prohibition was intended for the ancient pagans only, who sincerely thought their idols to be gods? Civilized nations know but little of stone idols. But a host of false gods, so cunningly fashioned that even the intellectuals fall down and adore, have been substituted. To the man who believes in immortality the arch-enemy presents spiritism. To the piously inclined he offers a false religion. To the ambitious he holds up honors and wealth. For the sensual he has fashioned the god of lust. What matters it how they adore or what they adore, as long as they are kept at a safe distance from the tabernacle of the Lamb of God? How

long will human beings continue to allow themselves to be misled by him who seeks only their destruction! Unhappiness will continue to fill the earth with tears, and hearts will go on bleeding until Christians arise in their might and strike down the false gods of hell.

CHAPTER X

HONESTY, THE BEST POLICY

THE ancient, Diogenes, who went about with a lantern seeking an honest man, might find his task more hopeless in our times than in the days of yore. A casual glance at the daily newspapers reveals to us the complexion of modern commercial and political life. Short weights, adulterated foodstuffs, deception, fraud, embezzling, graft and a list of other forms of dishonesty, furnish the reporter with an abundant supply of matter for copy.

Honest men who have sought political office, tell us that sincerity and virtue are not wanted in the political world. Upright dealers in food and merchandise assure us that the strict adherence to the principles of honesty is a positive obstacle in the quest of wealth. And

our own observations will have convinced us that the man who is able to make many promises—he with the broad smile and friendly hand-shake—is the one whose name heads the list on the day after election. We also find the unscrupulous merchant and profiteer accumulating the wealth, while his honest competitor struggles along in the middle class.

Is honesty, then, the best policy? Or would it not be far better to adapt ourselves to the spirit of the times, to throw off the shackles of a too exacting conscience? God forbid that Catholics should ever seek the level of the children of the modern world. For what is the reason for dishonesty as we find it all about us, but the lack of faith, the materialism that seems to be the very life-principle of the world? Religion is looked upon as some pleasing diversion to pass away the long hours of a Sunday. But it has no place in the workshop, in the factory, in the store or office. A hundred and one themes are discussed in the Sunday sermon, but there is no earnest endeavor made to implant

the fear of God and obedience to His commandments in the hearts of men. The result is, that men and women who are still church-goers look upon religion as the great champion of prohibition or the zealous promoter of foreign missions. But they do not expect to be told in church that dishonesty is a crime—at least not their particular kind of dishonesty. And thus business covers a multitude of sins.

However, the Catholic must have quite another viewpoint. We cannot expect the strict inculcation of honesty from any form of religion that has employed deceit, fraud, and falsification of the Scriptures to justify its own existence. But the Catholic Church is the institution of Him who said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." She insists upon honesty in all our dealings with our fellow-men, and she condemns deceit, graft, bribery, and all other forms of dishonesty, as sins that merit the punishment of God.

What an honor for the Church that Catholics are sought for positions of trust by those who

must have honest servants. But not only the fear of confession and the obligation of returning unjustly acquired goods should prompt us to honesty. Our Faith tells us that it really is the best policy.

The successful politician may wield great power within the sphere of his activities. He may be the instigator of laws and the supervisor of government. He may amass great wealth—but in a few short years death, the inevitable leveler, will overtake him. And as he lies there on his couch of pain, and the years of his existence pass swiftly before his eyes,—what then will be his judgment of his own past? The wealth gathered in the heyday of his existence will be but little comfort to him who fain would give everything for a peaceful conscience. The fame that crowned his name and apotheosized his power, will only bear testimony to the sinfulness of his life. He stands before the Gate of Life a pauper; his body, for which he labored and sinned will be buried un-

der the ground; his soul, destitute of embellishment and reeking with the stench of crime, is no fit subject for beatitude. What remorse, what anguish fills his soul as the folly of his life is brought home to him by death.

And the merchant, employer, or employee who hopes to gain by dishonesty, needs but think of the great day of judgment when the depth of his iniquities will be fathomed by the eyes of the world, when the fraud and deceit that gained him fortune will be unmasked in all its wretchedness. Can the wealth of the whole world make amends for the shame and confusion of that awful day?

“Thou shalt not steal” is the commandment of God that was thundered down from Mount Sinai. And every form of unjust acquisition of another’s property is condemned by these words of God.

State laws may outlaw old debts and absolve bankrupts from the obligation of restoring what belongs to another. But the law of God

ordains that "a thing cries for its owner", and neither state law nor magistrate can alter this truth.

We have been told that debts remaining unpaid for a certain number of years become outlawed, and the creditor cannot collect. The law may have a purpose. But conscience tells us that a just debt must be paid if possible. If certain goods of value have been given to us with the understanding that we will pay the equivalent in money at our convenience, there is a solemn obligation present to fulfill our part of the contract. That obligation remains as long as the debt is unpaid, and goes over to our heirs.

The world may applaud dishonesty and call it sagacity, but the law of God calls it crime. And as such it will be recorded in the Book of Life, to bear testimony against its perpetrators on the day of judgment. In the light of faith, honesty is always the best policy.

CHAPTER XI

MORALITY OR RUIN?

BUT a few years ago we were advised that the return of millions of soldiers of all nations to their homes would produce a most wholesome effect upon the world's morality. It was argued that these men who had faced death, who had witnessed the wholesale carnage of the most sanguinary war of all times, would be filled with a horror for the levities and debauchery of modern life, and would exercise a most benign influence upon the world about them for the amelioration of ethical standards.

However, after two years of peace, this hoped-for improvement of public morals has not materialized. Quite the contrary is true. It seems as though high wages and shorter working hours have given an impetus to uni-

versal immorality. What was considered grossly immoral and immodest on the stage, or in the ball-room a score of years ago, is to-day termed "clean" and "wholesome". Can it be possible that a generation of prudes inhabited the earth twenty years ago? Rather it is to be feared that men and women have grown so calloused in their association with the vulgar and sinful, that vice, the hideous monster, has become tolerable, yes, even lovable.

But the manhood and womanhood of every country is developing the unmistakable signs of our viciousness. For the blood that courses through the veins of men and women is largely tainted and infected with the leprous consequence of sin.

We are amazed at the revelations of military examiners who declare that the so-called social disease has a strong hold on the youth of the land. We clamor for laws of sex-hygiene and what-not to turn the tide of pollution that threatens to engulf us. But what about the laxity and positive immorality of our theaters?

Can the continuous showing of vice in its most virulent form have any other effect upon young men and young women than to fan to flame of fever-heat the passions that burn in their breasts?

While we anxiously call upon the nation to devise some means of preventing the spread of vicious diseases, we sit by and allow the hundred and one devices of the devil for the destruction of our youth to thrive.

And all this is knowingly tolerated by city and state officials! All the evil spirits are let loose to destroy morality, purity, and reverence. Not a single effort is made to prevent the minds of young people from being infected with the corruption of our age. Not a single safeguard is thrown about them.

The Church of God is grieved to note the depths to which our generation has sunken. And as our great Mother, she seeks to enlarge the scope of her activities; she strives with every means at her disposal to save the world from utter ruin.

She condemns the fickleness of modern styles in clothing. She condemns the modern theater as the hot-bed of sin and the nursery of vice. She openly declares that modern morality, conceived of irreligiousness and materialism, is not only bringing about the ruin of nations and untold misery and unhappiness among the world's inhabitants, but is actually dragging thousands down into a hell of torment and suffering that none but the damned can estimate.

However, our morality and our fickleness are but the logical conclusion reached by the philosophy that governs the nations. If there is no God,—and men will cling to this absurdity—then let us make the best of the few years of life that are ours. If death ends all things for me as it does for the beast that is harbored in my barn, then on with revelry and lawlessness. These will at least drive away the worries of business and amend for the pains and sorrows of existence.

But if there is a God, and if it be true that this life is but a preparation for a life to come,

—if after a few short years death will open up the portals of eternity, and if that eternity will be for me either of untold happiness or of unspeakable anguish and torment accordingly as I have observed the will of God—then the world is mad to go on as it does in riotousness and debauchery. And every leader and every teacher, religious or other, who does not condemn in unmistakable terms the trend of the times, is a false teacher and a traitor to his calling.

We hear many reformers growing eloquent in their tirades against the use of liquor or tobacco. But do they ever raise their voices against the evils of the divorce-mill, present-day immodesty, or the utter lack of religious training in the schools?

Catholics sometimes think that their Church is not abreast with the times, and that she dwells too much on the wickedness of moderns which she cannot change. God be praised that she is not abreast with the times if modernity means the abandoning of the Ten Commandments

and the open gate to all the filth that hell has invented. And if she dwells at great length on the sinfulness of the times, she is only doing that which she has been commissioned to do, viz.: to teach all nations to do what God has commanded.

If, by any conceivable possibility, the Catholic Church should be destroyed from the world, the next score of years would find human beings in such a depth of wickedness and abandonment that the conditions once obtaining in Sodom and Gomorrha would be but mildly comparable.

For she alone can demonstrate her authority to teach; she alone speaks infallibly in matters of faith and morals; she alone teaches what the Master commanded her to teach, and not merely the private judgments of her ministers; she alone stands before the world to-day the mighty champion of righteousness, the unfettered foe of vice, the guardian of virtue, the infallible guide that points out the Way, the Truth and the Life to the wandering pilgrim.

CHAPTER XII

CENSORSHIP OF AMUSEMENTS

LIKE a filthy stream of corruption flowing through the land and spreading its horrible pollution far and wide, is the current of modern amusements.

Lest it seem that I condemn categorically all forms of modern amusement, I hasten to admit that it is but an abuse of their possibilities that makes the dance-hall, the stage, and the screen liable to condemnation. To be sure, there are many who enjoy dancing without compromising virtue. Some theatrical performances are to be highly recommended for the good they may effect. And even moving-picture shows are at times elevating and instructive. But take up your daily newspaper, look at the theatrical announcements, and what

is the tone of the average announcement of plays and film-shows? Go to the dance-halls and are not voluptuous dances the order of the program? Dances, dramas and photo-plays seem to have their being and existence in the theme of the sex relations.

The mayors of our cities no longer censor these amusements; and one is put down as an "old foggy" if he ventures to voice his disgust. Reformers seem to find an inexhaustible supply of abuses, but fail to see the glaring evil of the resorts of sin. But can this go on forever? What will be the outcome of it all for Church and State? Even now the State is at a loss to account for its failing manhood. And the Church is bending every effort to find ways and means to save its youth from ruin.

But the Church alone is powerless; she must have the unstinted support of the fathers and mothers of families. In countries where the greater part of the population is either heretical or infidel, the Church will accomplish but little in her endeavors to refine the tone of

amusements. She can only hope to throw out the warning, and with the coöperation of parents, place the guard of virtue around our children.

To Catholic parents, therefore, the call goes out to censor the amusements which their children attend. Of course, it would be out of the question for them to visit every picture-house, dance-hall and theater to review the program offered. But announcements in the daily newspapers, titles, and comments generally give us a fair notion of the nature of the entertainment that seeks public patronage.

Catholic parents cannot allow their children to attend the sex-plays, and the films and stage productions that revel in suggestiveness. As a rule, the mere title of a play will give us a clew to its nature and purposes. A great number of the films shown in our moving-picture theaters are unfit to be seen by self-respecting adults, and are not at all wholesome for the growing generation. The frequent portrayal of the use of drugs and the effects

observed, cannot but exercise a pernicious influence upon the minds of boys and girls. Then we have the revolting crimes of social degenerates, the irreverent treatment of the most sacred prerogative of woman, the frequent representation of suicide, murder, and crime of every description. The dime-novel of years ago was only mildly injurious to the minds of the young, as compared to the evil influence of the lower type of moving-pictures.

True, in a number of states we have boards of censors who scrutinize every foot of film before it is produced. But unless the censors be of strong moral character, unless they are men and women who are guided by the highest standards of morality, censorship will not attain that efficiency which Catholic parents must demand.

As for dancing, but little effort would be required to learn the policy of the various halls. Only such dances should be attended by Catholics which are conducted by men or women of unquestionable moral fiber.

Catholics must bear in mind that, although they do not form a majority in the various cities, states, or nations, they undoubtedly represent a force that is counted upon by the producers of amusements. We are too strong to be ignored. And if Catholic parents everywhere should rise up in protest against the filth of immoral amusement enterprises; if they should exercise censorship and strictly forbid their sons and daughters to attend amusements condemned by them, we may be sure that the result would be, not only the preservation of the virtue of Catholic young men and women, but a decided move for the purification of dance-hall and theater morals. In the words of Father Garesché in his book "Your Neighbor and You", "We are too many, too widespread, too necessary, we Catholics, for most social gatherings to be quite complete unless we choose to go."

We cannot hope for much reform from other quarters. The law of the land lays no strictures upon immorality unless it be unvarnished

and condemned by all. The non-Catholic churches do not seem to be aware that there is a danger in the modern forms of amusement, or else they are indifferent. Therefore, Catholics must rise up in all their strength and exercise every influence to prevent their children from being contaminated at the vicious stream that courses freely through the land. Seventeen million Catholics in the United States! Do we realize that ten million Freemasons would close every parochial school in the country and pass laws to make the practice of our religion next to impossible? Why then must we, whose numbers are far greater than those of Freemasons in this country, sit by idly whilst the enemies of our holy Religion wreak their terrible vengeance upon God, by tearing our children right out of our arms and leading them to sin and destruction?

A terrible day of judgment will dawn when this world has rounded out its course. Can we imagine anything more deplorable than the utter despair of parents who will stand on the

left side of the Judge, awaiting the terrible words of condemnation, because they failed in the one great work that was assigned to them, the safeguarding of the virtue of their children?

Let no spirit of toleration warp our judgment in censoring the amusements that our children may attend. And God grant that the day is not far off when strict laws will make it impossible for immoral vultures to grow fat by catering to all that is low and depraved in human nature.

CHAPTER XIII

SMALL BEGINNINGS

IF all the wickedness were apparent, and all the evil consequences were disclosed to us when first we presume to tread the flowery path of vice, no man would plunge into ruin and damnation for the little pleasure that sin can buy. But there is the subtlety of temptation. It leads you on, carefully screening from your eyes the abyss of misery that awaits you at the end of the path. It counsels recklessness, and assures you that you will gain for your knowledge and experience. It tells you that your small irregularities are only trifles and that they cannot brand you with the mark of serious viciousness. But remember:

“There is a method in man’s wickedness;
It grows up by degrees.”

The unfortunate victim of the fascinating gambling table played for small amounts at first. He probably was aware, in the beginning, that the game had an attraction for him which was irresistible, and that here was a danger that might eventually prove to be his undoing. But he reasoned that there could not be much harm in a small hazard. His reasoning was correct as far as it went. But for some people the allurements of gambling is so strong that its charm completely masters them. In the passion of the game they forget home and business obligations; they rob their wives and children of happiness; they stifle in their own breasts all sense of honor. Their losses bring about a state of nervous worryment that borders on insanity. Moral and physical ruin is the result of their passion. But then it is too late to speak of self-denial and reform. Bound and shackled in the slavery of this sin, men are too weak to break their bonds.

Again, we hear so much in our day of the "eternal triangle", the infidelity of husbands

and wives. The repeated accounts of broken marriage vows recorded in the newspapers, the frequency with which plays of this kind are presented on the stage give evidence of the prevalence of this crime.

Now the man or woman who has been untrue to the solemn promises made at the altar, probably had no intention of committing a crime when first he or she met the third person. However, the danger was apparent at the first meetings; and the joy and happiness of subsequent clandestine reunions gave evidence enough that here was no longer a platonic affection, sexless, harmless and sinless, but a positive defiance of human nature. Not after crime had already been committed, but just as soon as it became apparent that there was danger of sinning, was the time to avoid the occasion and avert the impending calamity. Clandestine meetings of men and women who already owe matrimonial allegiance and fidelity to another, are to be abhorred as most grievous violations of the sacred troth.

We also find that the rapid fall of the embezzler may be traced to small beginnings. He does not proceed by taking great sums of another's money. He "borrows" five or ten dollars. Later he "borrows" fifty. While he is at it, he might just as well take a hundred or more. To be sure, he does not call his pilfering "theft"; he intends to return every cent when fortune smiles on him again. But the total amount of his "loans" is soon far beyond his assets—and the crash comes. His good name is lost, and neither wealth nor work can bring it back again. When first he was tempted to "borrow" surreptitiously, he should have said a firm "No, I will not!" and his misfortune never would have come to pass.

Perhaps at no time will the need of stifling the early beginnings of sin become more apparent than in the tender years of childhood. Right here let us register our emphatic disapproval of the tendency of modern fathers and mothers to pamper their children and to allow them every wish and whim. It is a great ques-

tion whether tender hearts or tender brains have brought about the abandonment of the "rod" in the rearing of children. Could our Catholic fathers and mothers of fifty years ago return to earth and witness the impertinence of the present-day children toward their parents and teachers,—could they but see the boldness of familiarity between the sexes, and the carelessness of parents in allowing their offspring to acquire, in tender years, habits of disobedience, untruthfulness and impiety—they would surely prophesy the coming of a generation of faithless and unconscionable men and women.

A child is much like a plant. When it is young and tender it is easily trained for the future. If you allow the plant to grow wild, it will send forth its stems and branches in every direction. Some will droop, others will rise boldly to the light only to be overcome by their own weight, break off and wither. If you fasten the young stems to something stable,

the plant will cling to its support and blossom gratefully.

So, too, the child's habits must, in the early years, be trained to cling to something stable and upright. The child must know, at the first dawn of reason, that its parents are its lawful superiors. And as the years go on, it must ever become more convinced that obedience to and respect for parents are as important as the daily nourishment. It may be necessary to use the "rod" or the "switch" occasionally. But even God finds Himself compelled to administer suffering and correction to His children in order to gain their love and obedience.

To preserve integrity, purity, and honor, the old must ever be watchful, and the young must be protected against the little beginnings of crime. Man is, in consequence of his fallen nature, easily led to sin. His inclinations are toward evil. Now it is a psychological fact that if he consents to a wrong, no matter how

small and trifling the irregularity may be, his power of resistance is thereby weakened. The second temptation need not be much stronger to lead him to a greater misdeed.

No one was better acquainted with the human soul and its faculties than the saints. We find that they abhorred even the slightest willful sin. Thus also, we should carefully avoid the small beginnings of wrongdoing. Our vigilance will give us cause for much gratification, and we shall never experience the remorse that tortures those who have tasted the bitter dregs of the cup of pleasure.

CHAPTER XIV

DOING BIG THINGS

THE title of this chapter is a pet phrase employed by writers to designate the activities of their idols in the world of commerce, in the arts, or in literature. But are the things thus named really big? Are they lasting? We hear of the great financier, Mr. So-and-So, "doing big things" in the financial world. But upon investigation we find that the amassing of unearned millions, the clever manipulation of stocks and bonds, and the hawk-like watching for the unpreparedness of another in order to seize his possessions and not offend the law, are the sum and total of his achievements.

The man of letters is often lauded as the author of great things in literature. But what is our disgust to discover that the products of

his pen are nothing more than filth and corruption! He spreads a false view of life; and instills the principles of wrong philosophical thinking into the minds of his readers. The "best-seller" at the bookstore, so frequently referred to as a "big" success, is usually of this type.

But even though the work of a man or woman be not of the caliber suggested, even if their labors be honest and above suspicion, can we speak of "big things" in regard to that which is merely transitory?

However, there are "big things" to be done in the world; and the ambitious man or woman will find that there is no dearth of opportunities.

Aside from the noble work of those who consecrate themselves as God's laborers, every parish offers innumerable ways of doing things that time will not obliterate.

There is, for instance, the splendid work of bringing the truths of God to the knowledge of those who would otherwise remain in igno-

rance of them. There are millions of people in our country, thousands in your city, who are absolutely ignorant of "the Way, the Truth and the Life". And since it is our firm conviction that no greater misfortune can befall a man than to lose the happiness of heaven, how trivial and worthless are the "big things" of life in comparison to the saving of one human soul?

But that is the work of priests, some one will say. They have the time and the ability to win souls. That is their vocation, to be sure, but is it not a fact that a layman is admitted where a priest is unwelcome? And do you not imagine that if a sound and respected business man would approach an infidel or an apostate Catholic, his influence would be far greater than that of a priest?

The man who has been successful in business is looked up to by the average citizen as a man of great sagacity and wisdom. If one of this type exercises the duties of the apostolate his efforts are sure to be attended with success.

Ours is essentially an age of lay activity. We cannot but admire the zeal of Protestant laymen in furthering the interests of their churches. We have every reason to expect that Catholic men and women of influence will lend their aid, their time, and their money in the furtherance of Catholic interests.

Then there is the admirable work of spreading Catholic literature. The nations are decidedly reading nations to-day. And the power of the press has never been limited. Every agency and every undertaking that hopes to succeed, liberally employs printer's ink. Now Catholic books, magazines and newspapers are here in great quantities. There are weekly, fortnightly, and monthly magazines published under Catholic direction that stand second to none of the magazines published by others. There are also very good Catholic newspapers which speak well for the ability and the zeal of their editors. The task before us, is to get these expressions of Catholic belief into the hands of those who are

searching for the truth. What greater work could be done than liberally to patronize the Catholic press and to expend our energies and our wealth in the circulation of these excellent missionaries?

Protestant educational institutions and missionary endeavors have been and are thriving, owing to the unheard-of sums of money lavished upon them by Protestant men and women of wealth, as well as by the toilers of that faith. In the meantime, Catholic universities are in dire straits, owing to the increased cost of everything and the lack of Catholic patronage. The Catholic missions are far behind their competitors in the matter of means to carry on their glorious work. Here are opportunities for "doing big things."

Is it a Catholic trait that when fortune smiles upon a Catholic, he either becomes indifferent to the needs of the Church and the opportunities for doing good, or becomes so avaricious that only with the greatest difficulty small donations for worthy purposes are extracted

from him? Whatever the reason may be, wealthy Catholics as a class are not measuring up to the generosity of Protestants of means; and instead of "doing big things," they are the authors and perpetrators of very "small" things.

But is the spread of Catholic literature, the apostolate of word and example, the endowment of charitable and educational institutions, the support of Catholic missions, to be construed as "doing big things"? The greatness of these works cannot be measured in words. They all tend to the great and admirable objective, the saving of immortal souls.

Not seldom an encouraging word or the perusal of a good book has wrought the conversion of men and women. Our charitable institutions throw open their doors to homeless waifs, to the aged and to the poor. Our experience with human nature will tell us what would be the fate of these orphans and helpless if the Church, the great Mother, would not lovingly take them to her bosom.

The Catholic colleges and universities constitute our main hope of combating the materialism and infidelity of our age. By sending professional men and women out into the world, who are guided by the principles of Christian philosophy, whose knowledge is built upon the firm bed-rock of faith, our institutions of learning are performing a service for the Church and for the world that will only receive its just appreciation on the day of judgment.

And the Catholic missions! Go to the Far East and witness the alarming condition of millions of our fellow-men who are absolutely ignorant of the first truths of Christianity. Or go to the southern and far-western states of our own country where thousands have never seen a Catholic priest, and many others see one but rarely—and you will realize that the work of the Catholic missions at home and abroad is a work whose scope is measured only by the circumference of the globe.

This is what is rightly called “doing big things.” For can any work, any endeavor,

any undertaking, be compared to the saving of one immortal soul? If only for one moment our eyes could look down into the abyss of hell and see the despair, the utter desolation and extreme anguish of the damned; and if we could but have one fleeting glance at the wondrous beauty of heaven and the ineffable joy of the blessed—we would need no further proof that the saving of one soul far outstrips the greatest work ever performed by financier, artist or littérateur.

The world, of course, places little value upon the soul; and its future is a matter of indifferent conjecture. But He who knows the value of this immortal spirit, the Creator, has stamped it as worth the price of the life-blood of His Only Begotten Son.

Doing great things for God and the spread of truth is a nobler task than the mere gathering of wealth or the achievement of fame. And as a "big thing" it will be recorded in the Book of Life long after the histories of great men will have been forgotten.

CHAPTER XV

COMMUNITY CENTERS

AT this writing a nation-wide survey is being made of the facilities offered by the various communities for recreation and amusement. The Community Service plan which became so popular during the war, and which offered home-like surroundings to many of our soldiers and sailors, is to be preserved in peace times. It is hoped to establish in every community a place of recreation, where men and women can congregate to spend their evenings or idle hours in wholesome relaxation. The motive behind this national movement, apparently, is to keep men and women from the dens of vice.

Although the Church welcomes any enterprise that tends to elevate morality, she will

hesitate to give her unqualified approval to these centers for the following reasons. The word non-sectarian, which is frequently attached to movements and institutions, very often means non-Catholic. Unless Catholics are given equal rights and equal authority with members of other denominations in the management and direction of these recreational centers, it is to be feared that the community center will no more be non-sectarian than the Y. M. C. A. or the Indian schools. Then again, the community house will undoubtedly be equipped with a library and reading rooms. Can we hope that Catholic books and periodicals will be given equal recognition on the shelves and tables with other books? Not unless Catholics are members of the directorate and have influence in the management. The danger to the faith of Catholics who are at liberty to read all the shades of belief that have sprung from private interpretation, not to speak of the works of agnostics and infidels, cannot be overestimated.

But perhaps the most subtle danger for Catholics will be that which springs from the constant intercourse of Catholics with non-Catholics—I mean mixed marriages. These unions have been a curse to the Church in America. Countless souls have been lost, and coldness and indifference to the Church has been the result of marriages between Catholics and men and women of other faiths. It was only by continual preaching and the beneficent aid of sodalities and parish societies that the number has not been doubled and tripled.

But with the advent of the community center the sodality and parish society will suffer. These houses will offer men and women every inducement for patronage. The frequent meetings of Catholics with non-Catholics in the social rooms and in the auditorium will produce the natural fruit, the forbidden marriage.

What can we do? We must provide Catholic recreational centers. For some time past the discussion of the practicability of Catholic community centers has been going on. The

time is at hand for action. Wheresoever possible, the Catholic community house must be established if we would ward off the danger that threatens our youth.

True, in many communities the Catholic population is not strong enough to support and maintain recreational centers. In this case it will be necessary for Catholics to insist upon the non-sectarian character of the public social centers.

The new conditions which are daily arising and offering new problems to Catholic leaders, make it all the more imperative for the latter to foster the sodalities for men and women. Monthly communion by young men and young ladies, instruction and admonition at the communion Mass—these are the means that must be brought into play and the benefits thereof extended to all our young people. It will be necessary to divide the parishes into districts, and with the help of zealous promoters, win those who are indifferent and lax to greater effort in behalf of their soul's welfare.

As one priest, who is well-versed in social and religious problems, remarked, the greatest evil in the attendance of Catholics at the so-called non-sectarian institutions, is not the efforts that are made to rob them of their faith, but the lack of sound character on the part of the Catholics themselves. If Catholics everywhere would insist upon their rights in the free practice of their religion, if they would always display themselves as unshaken and unassailable in matters of faith and morals, there would be less danger, and also fewer attempts made to ridicule their religion. It would be taken for granted that a Catholic will attend Mass on Sundays, that he will go to Holy Communion at least monthly, and will abstain from flesh-meats on Fridays.

But in order to acquire this soundness of faith and strength of character the sodalities must be kept in flourishing condition. They must be the nurseries of virtuous thinking and conscientious action. They must continue the inestimable work of the parochial school.

Who, after all, is happier, the boy or girl who has books and games, amusements, and recreation without end, or the one who, consecrated to our Mother in heaven, preserves an innocent heart and a pure mind?

Let us first of all safeguard the soul and insure its eternal happiness. The tendency to furnish every possible convenience and gratification to the body springs from the nature of modern religion, which concerns itself more with the life in this world than with the life to come.

But, of course, our young people will want bodily comforts too. They will seek out community centers, and unless these are under Catholic supervision, or at least offer no danger to the faith of the young, they will prove to be inimical to Catholic progress.

Let us, therefore, meet as far as possible the demand for social centers. But let us, above all, foster love and attachment to our sodalities and Catholic societies.

CHAPTER XVI

VOTING WOMEN

EMANATING from the fanatic brain of Rousseau, embodied in the Declaration of Independence, the mouth-filling phrase, "all men are created equal" has become the most abused argument for woman suffrage. As far as the soul is concerned, we admit the truth of the French philosopher's statement. But no person of sound mind will attempt to defend the equality of the sexes. Aside from the fact that nature has clearly defined the distinction, and has lent to the man as well as to the woman peculiar abilities and inclinations, the history of the world has never written an authentic record of women with the same endowments, the same strength and abilities as men. True, we have our so-called new-woman

who has been odiously named feminist. She adopts mannish ways and attire, and she rides her horse astride. But her kind is limited, and is to be found mostly among the women of wealth and leisure.

Not upon the alleged equality of sexes can the right to equal suffrage be based. But there is, nevertheless, great merit in the demand of women for the vote.

The Church has given no ruling on woman suffrage, and will probably not try to exert her influence for or against the measure. For the question is a child of recent times, and is more of political than of religious importance. But many bishops here and in other countries have openly declared in favor of the right of women to vote.

The Most Rev. Austin Dowling, D.D., Archbishop of St. Paul, bases his argument in favor of suffrage on the fact that woman and her interests are not represented in our government. Legislation, the Archbishop asserts, is brought about not so much by the leg-

islators' sense of justice and equity, but by the influence that is brought to bear upon the legislative body. And as there is no power which the office-holder fears more than the votes that may exalt or dethrone him, his greatest work is performed in the interest of those who control the vote. Consequently woman, unrepresented, and unable to say a word in the choice of law-makers suffers an injustice.

True, the proper sphere for the woman is the home. And unhappy the day when she is taken away from her lofty and important calling as mother and housewife. But what about the years before her marriage, the years when she is compelled to earn a living? And what about the great number of those unable to marry?

You may say that much of recent legislation has been in the interest of women. It is true; but why? Because of the ever-growing tendency to recognize their claims.

Some one might fear that woman, because of her numerous duties in the home, will not be

able to vote intelligently on important questions. Surely, she can vote with as much intelligence as the man who is swayed by the street-corner orator, or who is led on by glaring posters and extravagantly staged political parades. For after all, it will be admitted that money plays a prominent rôle in our elections. And it is only the fact that we have two great opposing political parties that saves the country from being tyrannized by a small ruling class. With these two great powers forever scrutinizing each other's actions while in power, the vote in the end actually becomes the instrument of securing good government. If there were no other argument in favor of woman suffrage, then the fact that women are most aggressive in the demand for reforms that would shield the growing generation from vice and sin, should give them the right to use the influence of the ballot in securing the much-desired laws.

Now that the necessary number of states has granted women the right to vote, thus making

it a national franchise, it is no longer a question whether Catholic women should vote. Catholic women must vote! It is their bounden duty, for our beloved country cannot forego the wholesome influence of their sound judgment on the politics of city, state or nation.

No use for Catholics to be ultra-conservative and lag behind others in the progress of the world. Why should they complain of the policies of administrations or officials if they will not raise a finger or voice their sentiments through the ballot box to help better those policies or help remove those officials? Why rant about the evils of Socialism if they will not jump into the fray to offset the votes of the women Socialists? Are Catholic women ready to assume the responsibilities? No greater mistake could be made than if they would refuse to go to the polls.

The number of women, in our country, of voting age runs into millions. It needs no mathematician to calculate the influence that woman's vote will exercise on governmental

policies in the future. It will also be patent that the neglect of a million Catholic voters to make use of their constitutional right to vote would open the doors for the professional bigots to pass laws and measures that would bring about a state of persecution akin to that experienced in Italy during the past fifty years.

Woman suffrage is here. We would do well to recognize its importance and its possibilities. Let every Catholic woman become familiar with the grave questions that are decided by the ballot. Let the Catholic societies for women conduct courses of instruction, so that their members may vote intelligently for the greater honor of God, for the suppression of vice and injustice, and for the welfare of the country.

CHAPTER XVII

WEDLOCK SANCTIFIED

WHAT sweeter gift of God than that of being His instruments in the wonderful work of creation! When in the beginning the Author of all things fashioned a body out of clay, infused into it an immortal soul and called His work the first man,—when He subsequently took a rib of this man and around it formed the body of the first woman, breathing into the molded figure the breath of life—He charged these creatures, saying, “Increase and multiply.”

From that memorable day unto the present, man and woman united in holy wedlock have been the agents of God in carrying on the marvelous work of propagating the human race.

God might have adopted another plan. He

might have called human beings into existence in adult form, endowed with knowledge and wisdom. But He preferred to give men and women the high privilege of bringing man into the world as a child and carefully rearing him according to God's own wishes. What a sublime calling! But also, what a tremendous responsibility! For that reason matrimony has been raised to the dignity of a sacrament, in order that men and women bound in this holy state might be supported by sacramental graces.

Now if God has determined that man and wife shall carry on His work of creation, what right have they to determine the amount of burden that they will assume? Is there any justification for "race-suicide"? We have read in the editorials of widely-spread journals that it is a crime to have large families. We have been told that God never intended to burden woman. We have repeatedly heard the statement that it is left to the parents to decide the number of their offspring. But where

in the Bible, in Tradition, or in the teachings of the Church of God can these bald statements find confirmation or proof? God commanded the first man and woman to increase and multiply. And every means of preventing the procreation of human beings, as commonly practiced in our day, is severely condemned in the Scriptures.

What are the reasons why some people wish to shirk the burdens of parenthood? There may be many; they are all summed up in the one word, selfishness. Comfort is desired, relief from the many little duties attending the rearing of a child. Freedom is demanded in order that there will be no binding ties to keep men and women at home. They seek freedom to participate in the revels and orgies of modern amusements. Wealth is sought, and consequently a small family is provided for. What a shame that human beings can be so much attached to themselves and to their own comforts that their hearts can find no room for the love of little children!

But some one will say, There are other reasons, and they are more important. What about a mother's health? Is it of no value? Certainly, her health is above all things earnestly to be desired. But if a physician warns a woman that she is in a precarious condition, and that she must limit the number of her offspring, what then? There is no doctor living who can tell with any degree of certainty what effects, salutary or harmful, motherhood will produce in the health of a woman. Medical men with a conscience rarely give out such advice. If physicians really meant what they said in such cases, they would not, if they had your welfare at heart, advise limitation of offspring, but would counsel absolute abstinence from marriage privileges. For they know that the infringement of the natural law will demand its penalty.

But granted that sickness, weakness and even death may ensue, this possibility does not give one the right to transgress the commandment of God.

Let us remember that our life or our death is in the hands of God. Not even a sparrow falls from the roof without His consent. What then can we hope to accomplish by defying His law? We deceive ourselves into believing that we can determine our future health and well-being. Do we not know that God may call the flower in its fullest bloom, or that He may allow our tree of life to become firmly rooted as the mighty oak? Do we not realize that it is His to say whether we shall be struck by the lightning bolt of a sudden death, or whether we shall be allowed to approach our natural end by decay and old age?

God wills that men and women united in holy wedlock "increase and multiply". He will surely not refuse His aid, His consolation in the arduous task and His eternal reward at life's end.

The saddest feature of the modern practice of limiting the number of children is that it makes it next to impossible for the persons concerned to receive the sacraments worthily.

The sacrament of penance is received without sufficient contrition, for there is evidently no firm purpose of amendment. The sins are confessed, it is true; but can we assume that the penitent has the intention of avoiding these sins in future? And thus sin is piled upon sin; sacrilege upon sacrilege. But horror of horrors! The depth of crime has not been reached. Like a Judas kissing his Master in betrayal, the perpetrators of marriage crimes brazenly approach the Holy Table to receive their God into hearts that are filled with sin.

Birth control—where did it originate? In the minds of those drones of the so-called smart set, whose selfish hearts have no room for other love than that of self. But practical and genuine Catholics cannot subscribe to this criminal creed. Let them sanctify matrimony by conscientiously fulfilling the law of the Most High. God's judgment day will decide who was right.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE BULWARK OF NATIONS

GREAT changes have come over the peoples of the world and the future may bring forth a revolution in living manners and commercial activities. Even our most experienced economists are at a loss to forecast the probable condition of nations after another twelve-month. Will the years to come bring peace and plenty, or will they be filled with slaughter, pillage and crime? Will the world again face a catastrophe such as the recent world-war? If so, what will follow? These are all questions that men are pondering over; but the answers to them are not forthcoming. Plainly, we do not know what the future holds in store for us. One thing is certain, the future citizens of the world will be good or bad accord-

ingly as they are reared from childhood. We cannot, therefore, place too much stress upon the need of good Christian surroundings in the home. For the Christian family is the bulwark of nations.

There is perhaps no greater evil among the numerous causes of present-day restlessness than the universal lack of respect for authority. Men have seen kings and emperors hurled down from their thrones in rapid succession. They have become accustomed to uprisings, sedition and revolution. And what was carried out on a large scale in various countries is being imitated in mines and factories, in schools and homes.

Certain it is, that those who controlled the wealth and power of the world, abused their strength for their own advantage. But in the general upheaval that has followed in the wake of war, those of the protesting classes have likewise abused and are now abusing their new-found strength.

There must be some form of government,

and, consequently, some must rule and others must be ruled. But if government should be stable and lasting, those who reign must be obeyed; their authority, which is theirs only by the grace of God, must be respected.

The need of the inculcation of this reverence for superiors, in earliest childhood, is at once apparent.

Naturally, the family in which God does not reign supreme will not rear God-fearing citizens. The practical and sincere Catholic, therefore, surrounds his children with a Catholic atmosphere. He goes before with the good example in virtue. Together man and wife labor in the great privilege of implanting in the hearts of God's little ones the love of obedience, truth, purity, and honesty.

The Christian home is not without its reminders of the heroes and heroines of virtue. The pictures of the saints, of the Blessed Mother and of Our Saviour give the home the unmistakable stamp of Christianity.

Then, too, in the home Catholic boys and

girls should learn to pray. "Give us this day our daily bread" is the prayer that is most abused by the revolutionaries of our age. They demand meat and drink and comforts in abundance. And they reject a God who will not supply them. They tell us, "We do not want a God who will give us plenty in the future, we want food and drink and pleasures right now."

It will be necessary to teach our children to pray, not only for the daily sustenance, but in all humility to acquiesce in the will of God. "Thy will be done." Too often our prayers are selfish. Too often the granting of our prayers would be detrimental to our soul's welfare. The tender flowers in the garden of the home must, therefore, learn to grow as the Hand of God trains them. They must gratefully receive the benediction of the Creator's sunshine and refreshing rain. Teach the precious little ones to pray; but teach them joyfully to submit to the will of the Father in heaven.

But more is required to give the home the true Christian atmosphere. The Spirit of God should reign in every Catholic house. In order to enjoy this privilege, the language of the dwellers must at all times be above reproach. Can we imagine anything more repugnant than the use of vile and filthy language in the home on the part of father, mother or children? Can God bless and consecrate the home in which His Holy Name is defiled and profaned?

As I write, I return in spirit to some of the homes that I have entered in my labors as a priest. I see in the first home matrimonial unhappiness. Discouragement is written boldly on the face of man and wife. Somehow, they do not seem to agree, and quarrels and strife are the order of the day. I look for the reasons. There are many. But is it not possible that through their continuous profanation of the Most Holy Name, God has withdrawn His grace and His blessing?

I enter another dwelling and I find that the

family has suffered untold misfortune. Children refuse obedience, curse their parents and even raise their hands against them. What can be the matter here? An old German proverb says: "The apple does not fall far from the branch." The curse of God rests upon that home. Why? Because parents have cursed everything about them. They have cursed their children; and the latter, following the example of their elders, curse their parents. Needless to say, such homes will not bring forth a race of practical Catholics; but will be the breeding-place of anarchists and murderers. And thus, gentle reader, I might lead you from home to home and reveal to you the terrible consequence of the use of foul language in the home.

One thing more that children should learn from earliest childhood, is that refinement which is pre-eminently the mark of a true Catholic. Politeness and consideration for others are not, necessarily, the distinction of the rich and cultured. They go hand in hand with

practical Catholicity. For is it not one of the greatest commandments to "love your neighbor as yourself"?

We are told that it is polite to use one's handkerchief when sneezing or coughing. It is more than politeness. It is the conscientious observance of the rule, "Do to others as you would have them do to you." We are solicitous for the health of our body; we avoid contagion and infection; we take all precautions so as not to contract disease. But the love we should bear our neighbor must prompt us to have the same care and anxiety for his well-being.

Neither do men or women of sane mind reveal to the world their hidden faults. They bury them deep down in their hearts. Much less do they go about slandering and calumniating themselves. But we should love our neighbor as ourselves. Our love for ourselves deters us from doing harm to our own good name. The same love must be shared with our fellow-men. The mantle of charity should

cover his faults; the spirit of love should extol his virtues.

This genuine Catholic love is to be expected in Catholics of maturity. But it will not be found unless it has been instilled into their hearts when young and impressionable.

The fate of the world lies in the hands of fathers and mothers. Was the great world-war with its untold sufferings and hardships, its cruel sacrifice of young manhood, its thousands and millions of weeping mothers and wives and pleading orphans—was this tremendous catastrophe but a warning of God? The world has not grown better. Vice is flourishing as never before. Those countries that have suffered most have not returned to God. Their great cities are now more than ever hot-beds of sin, crime and debauchery. Will the anger of God burst forth in the near future with a more terrible punishment? Will perhaps another war be visited upon us, with all the horrors that human and diabolical ingenuity can devise?

God grant that we may be spared a repetition of the slaughter. But then, the world must change. Men must cease to defy God and to hurl their blasphemies against Heaven. We must begin at the root. We must sanctify the Christian home, the bulwark of nations.

CHAPTER XIX

THE SOCIAL UNREST

MANY Americans seem to think that Bolshevism is a new phenomenon of the ever-changing social world. The impression is held that this new species of anarchy and lawlessness was born of the Russian revolution. Even conservative Socialists, here and abroad, seek to disclaim any relation to this beast of hell. But let us not be deceived. Bolshevism is not the child of Russian tyranny; it is not the creation of the fanatical brain of a Lenin or a Trotzky. It is the logical consequence of the false teachings of Socialism which have been widely sown in every land during the last fifty years. Since stringent war-measures checking the license of speech have been lifted, it is nothing uncommon to hear

soap-box orators denouncing our government and appealing for a bloody revolution to deprive owners of mines and manufactories of their property. In turn they would set up the communist government of the soviet.

Throughout the land we hear of riots, rapine and plunder, so that strong men are fearing for the welfare of nations.

Any economic plan for governing nations that denies man the right to hold property justly acquired, will lead to just such lawlessness that made the streets of Moscow, Petrograd, Berlin and Munich flow red with blood. Any communistic or other system of government that denies the existence of God, thereby takes away the sanction of law and enkindles the fires of anarchy, which will, if not extinguished or kept within the bounds of a small area, form a conflagration that will destroy the liberty, peace and happiness of the whole world.

If we are to protect ourselves against the rabid onslaughts of Bolshevism, we must fight atheistic Socialism.

But where does the Church stand on these momentous questions, upon the correct solution of which depends the stability of nations? Does she champion the cause of capitalism in its endeavor to deny the laboring man the right to collective bargaining? By no means. To be sure, the capitalist is as much entitled to his property as the owner of nothing more than a home. He is also entitled to just gains from his invested capital and from the work of his brain. But dead buildings, machinery and invested money are not worthy of more consideration than is man, who is made to the image of God.

Some manufacturers and owners of mines seem to harbor the false idea that the laboring man is much like the machine that is installed to produce work. To their mind it is unavoidably necessary to expend some money in keeping them going. But faith tells us that, next to the angels, man is the noblest creature that went forth from the Hands of the Creator. The laboring man, be he ever so grimy and

unkempt, is made after the image of God. He is infinitely more worthy of consideration than machinery or invested capital. And the owner and employer has no right to large dividends and luxurious living until his employee is well provided for. Not only must every precaution be taken to safeguard his health, not only must he have reasonable hours of work, but he must be recompensed to such a degree that, if he is frugal, he need not suffer want or privation, and that when the "rainy day" comes he is able to meet added expense from his savings.

But is the Church drifting to Socialism? Not at all. She proposes nothing new, but insists on justice. She takes the golden mean between capitalistic exploitation and socialistic communism. The laborer has the inalienable right to organize. And when all other means have failed, he has the right to strike. Because strikes are a great evil and work untold hardship upon innocent people, they are only to be endorsed when all other attempts at

securing justice have proven futile. The laborer is in the wrong when he has recourse to sabotage and lawlessness.

For fifty years the spirit of unrest among the working classes has been apparent. Never before has it assumed such tremendous proportions as in our own day. If the anarchistic element among our working men should acquire the controlling power in the trades-unions what would become of the country? A combined steel, coal and railroad strike would paralyze every industry and result in great suffering, and, who knows, might bring upon us a cataclysm not unlike the reign of terror experienced in the darkest days of the Russian upheaval.

Needless to say, every sane man and woman among the workers or the captains of industry must bend every effort to avert the catastrophe. We must have stringent laws to put an end to the game of professional agitators who come here from foreign lands and sow the seeds of rebellion and sabotage. We must also have

laws that compel owners and capitalists to pay their employees a just and living wage.

Even now, after so many years of unsettled conditions, and in the face of impending dangers of the gravest nature, the heads of some of our greatest corporations are declaring unequivocally against the right of labor to collective bargaining. It cannot go on forever thus. The spirit of rebellion which has been fed on abuse and exploitation cannot longer be disregarded. A solution to the labor problem must be found, and found at once.

The time is ripe when the greed for gold and the luxuries that gold can buy, must be met with the stern mandate of justice and charity. Such fortunes of unearned wealth as were amassed in late years are but indications of the inequality of our conditions.

The laboring man, after all, is the producer. A sense of justice would demand that he be recompensed in proportion to his labors. Students of sociology contend, and their opin-

ions are endorsed by high Church authorities, that there never will be peace and contentment in the social world until the man who provides the brawn and muscle is given a share in the profits from his productions, as well as a word in the management of industries.

The mediæval guilds under the protection of the Church championed the rights of owners as well as workers. To be sure, there were no men of the fabulous wealth of to-day; neither was there pauperism. And unless the counsel of the Church is followed in our own times; unless her strict demands of justice are complied with—we shall seek in vain for the talisman that will bring about a satisfactory solution of the social problem.

CHAPTER XX

PRAYER

WHAT is the use of praying? Surely, God knows what is good for us; He knows our weaknesses and our strength. Why should it be necessary to lay our wants before Him? St. Thomas replies: "God gives us many things out of His liberality without our asking; but some things He wills to give us only on condition of our asking; which arrangement works to our advantage, teaching us to have recourse to God with confidence, and to recognize Him as the Author of our good."

The modern world ridicules praying as a foolish superstition, to be tolerated in women and children but to be severely condemned in men. But the truth is, that prayer is a most glorious privilege of man. Either we assume

that there is an eternal God, Creator of the universe, who rules our destinies, or there is no God. The latter is an absurdity. For the fragrance of the flowers that grow in my garden, the luminous sentinels in the heavens, the roaring rivers, and sighing oceans, loudly proclaim the existence of the Creator who called them into being. Only an absurd logic, that fails to see the relation between cause and effect, can deny God.

If there is a God and our existence is dependent upon His will; if our God is wealthy beyond all calculation, in the things that make for our temporal and eternal happiness—why should it be unreasonable to apply to Him for His blessing? And have we not His assurance, “Ask, and it shall be given to you”? Repeatedly we read in the Holy Scriptures that it is the will of God that we should pray. We find that He commanded His apostles to pray lest they fall into temptation. And it was the custom of Our Saviour to ascend the mountain after the day’s labors to spend some time in

prayerful communion with His Father. He Himself taught us to pray; how then can any one reject prayer as a superstition?

Have you ever tried to gauge the caliber of those who ridicule prayer? They may be divided into three classes, viz.: fools, the proud, and criminals. Fools laugh at prayer simply because they are fools. The proud disdain our devotions because they are so puffed up with vanity and conceit that they believe themselves self-sufficient. Criminals, in the widest sense of the word, those who delight in breaking the law of God and man, do not pray because prayer does not fit into their mode of life.

Our prayers frequently ascend to God with the request for some temporal good. Are such prayers becoming? St. Augustine says: "He not unbecomingly wishes for a competence in life, who wishes for that and no more. Such a competence is not desired for its own sake, but for the health of the body and the decent personal condition of the man, that he may not be out of place in the society in which he has to

live. When such a competence is attained, we should pray to keep it; when we have it not, we should pray to get it." There can be no doubt about the worthiness of the prayer that implores God for daily bread and for protection in sickness and danger. Only then our prayer becomes unworthy when we make the temporal goods the prime object of our desire, and aim no higher in our appeals to God. Thus St. Thomas says: "When our mind attends to temporal things in order to set up its rest in them, there it lies low abased; but when it attends to such things in view of gaining that which is final happiness, it is not abased by them but rather raised on high."

But some one will say, often have I prayed and prayed in vain; my petitions were not heard. This may be due to either of two reasons. God may demand a more earnest and persevering prayer; or the thing for which we ask is not conducive to our eternal welfare. It stands to reason that God, whose omniscience clearly sees the future, knows what will be for

our eternal happiness, as well as the things that would impede us on our journey homeward. In mercy and kindness He cannot grant that which will be the source of future sins and perhaps lead to our eternal damnation. He is the Physician of the soul. If the patient were to prescribe the remedies for his own ailments, he would probably choose the medicines agreeable to the taste and smell. The result might be his death.

We should pray, therefore, with full conformity of our will to the Will of God. Our prayer will then be productive of merit, and whether we see the fruits of our prayer or not, we may rest assured that God has stored up abundant riches for us. If there will be anything to laugh about in heaven, I imagine it will be the things that worried us when on earth. How small and trifling our temporal wants will then seem when compared to the wealth, the magnificence, the grandeur that will be ours in heaven!

But perhaps you think that there is no use

for the sinner to pray. He is an enemy of God, who has lost his right to heaven, and consequently God will turn a deaf ear to his appeals. No, indeed, the sinner is not deprived of the great privilege of speaking to God in prayer. True, his sin is hated by God, but he is made to the image of God and is loved by Him. St. Thomas says that the prayer of the sinner is heard by God, not out of justice, but out of mercy. Behold the beautiful example of a sinner's prayer in the petition of the "good thief" on the cross. Scarcely was the prayer uttered, when the mercy of the Redeemer rewarded it with a promise of everlasting bliss.

One of the reasons for many unheard prayers is, no doubt, the frivolity and lack of sincerity with which these prayers often pass over our lips. A hundred and one distractions occupy our mind; and our prayer is said more from force of habit than from any earnest desire to receive that for which we ask. How can such prayers be heard? They sometimes

are sinful acts inasmuch as they make light of the privilege to pray, and offer God the affront of impiety.

Never in the history of the world has the blessing and good will of God been needed more to preserve the perpetuity of nations. Not one government is secure, and a twelve-month may bring about a revolution in the most stable of governments. Men and women, fired by the ardor of patriotism, have sought far and wide for remedies to settle the turbulent conditions in social and commercial life. They have appealed to the brains and brawn of their respective countries, and, it seems, no satisfactory solution to our world problems is being found. What about appealing to God? We have relied too much upon our own strength and capabilities. Have we forgotten that God rules the world and that "no hair of our head is bent except by His consent"?

Therefore, down on your knees, America! Down on your knees, ye nations of the world,

and lift up your hands and your hearts in prayer. He who has mapped out the course of the stars and planets; who gave the ocean its boundaries; who spoke the word of omnipotence that gave us being—He is still the Ruler of the world. Kings and queens, emperors and presidents must bow in submission to His will.

At no time in the history of the world was prayer more neglected; at no time was it as indispensable for the universal good.

CHAPTER XXI

THE FOURTH R

EDUCATION has been humorously referred to as “the three R’s, Readin’, Ritin’, and ‘Rithmetic.” But what about the fourth R—Religion? I imagine that ten hundred thousand voices would be raised in violent protest if our educators should decide to drop mathematics from the curriculum of our schools. How would the world get on with a generation unfamiliar with the multiplication tables and the rules for division, subtraction and addition? Can we imagine the confusion that would reign among merchants and customers? Why it is simply absurd to think of such a contingency. And yet mathematics plays a very small rôle in the destiny of man. Were we to live upon earth a thousand years, and were the

accumulation of wealth the main object of our existence, then indeed mathematics might be of prime importance. But our life upon earth is as a moment compared to the eternity for which we have been created.

Man goes forth from the creative hand of God, as a being to whom a few years of earthly existence are allotted in order that he may merit the eternal reward of the vision of God. The attainment of this end is in a large measure dependent upon his own endeavors. Spelling will not help him, neither will writing nor arithmetic. Yes, even if he has mastered the deepest tracts of science and philosophy, if he has not served his God he will be a failure, he will not attain his end.

Religion teaches man his object in life; it equips him with the means of gaining that for which he has been made. How then can any system of education be complete or sufficient, which fails to instruct the young in the most vital knowledge for the attainment of success?

It is idle for teachers and instructors to ha-

rangue their pupils on the formation of character and on the need of honesty, purity, and justice. What meaning do these words convey to those who hear nothing of God and His commandments? Human nature is not inclined to honesty, purity, and justice. Left to itself, it is much like the nature of the beast. Words can not affect it if there is no sanction behind those words.

For this reason conscientious educators have recognized the fallacy of our popular educational system. And from many sides we hear the demand for religious instruction as an important branch of education.

Our much-maligned parochial schools alone have the right idea as to the proper method of preparing our youth for life. Here, religion is not looked upon as something optional and non-essential. It is considered the first and foremost foundation of true education. When you have taught the child the existence of an All-holy God who rewards virtue and punishes sin, then you may talk of purity, honesty

and justice. And these words will convey something tangible. When you have laid the foundation of morality, the Ten Commandments, you can build character.

Ask the boy or girl who has graduated from High School, "Why have you been created?" and in ninety cases out of a hundred they will not be able to answer. Do you call that education which neglects to inform the child of the very object of its existence? We should be amazed and shocked if our graduates were unable to read or write; but we look on with complacency when the same boy or girl is unfamiliar with knowledge of far greater importance.

No reasonable man, be he Catholic, Protestant, or Jew, can take offense at the work of the parochial schools. Indeed, were he sincere in his endeavor to obtain the best education for the youth of the land, he would be compelled to endorse the parochial schools and hold them up for the admiration and emulation of the whole nation.

Let it not be gleaned from this, that parochial schools teach religion to the detriment of other branches of education. The children of our schools have stood every test; they have come out victorious in competitive trials; they have demonstrated that in spite of the fourth R they are undeniably well acquainted with the usual three R's.

And this is not to be wondered at. The sisters and brothers that teach in our schools are not the products of slip-shod methods of education. The great majority have been equipped similarly to our normal school graduates. Not a few have earned university degrees. Every summer you will find hundreds and thousands of nuns attending colleges and schools to better fit themselves for their life's work, the education of the young.

With them it is not a matter of dollars and cents. Not one of them receives one half the remuneration of the poorest-paid public-school teacher. It is the love of God and love for immortal souls that fires their breasts and

compels them to bring most heroic sacrifices in order to fashion young hearts as God would have them.

Actuated by the sublimest of motives, having constantly before their eyes the high destiny of man, schooled in the most modern methods of education, our sisters in the parochial schools have a system of education second to none.

No nation has been able to remain prosperous and enduring without morality. Just as soon as the people plunge themselves into vice and sin, the nation's death-knell is sounded. But where is the power that can stem the tide of vice and corruption that threatens to engulf our Ship of State? Will our children who grow up without the knowledge of God and of their own sublime destiny be able to save the nation from disintegration, or will they add fuel to the flame that menaces our national structure?

Secret societies, even Christian associations, have planned and plotted against the parochial school. Their efforts are directed against na-

tional prosperity and stability. To-day approximately two million children in the United States are attending parochial schools. They are being educated to fear God, to love their country, to obey the laws, and to respect authority. Close the parochial schools and you tear down one of the mainstays of our nation. For the child that does not learn to obey the commandments of God, will not obey the laws of the land. The child that is taught only to earn its bread and butter will shun sacrifice, will be disrespectful to lawful authority—the product of an education that ignores the very object of the child's existence, eternal companionship with God.

CHAPTER XXII

THE GREATEST LEADER OF ALL

HAVE you ever been on board an ocean-liner during a severe storm at sea? How frightened and nervous every one seemed to be. Or have you ever had the experience of being in a crowded hall or theater when, of a sudden, the cry of "Fire" was heard? How frenzied the people became, and, left to their own resources, rushed to the nearest exit, regardless of those in their path.

Well, a storm is raging to-day, not only in one locality, but the world over. Like a mighty tempest that uproots trees and tears down houses, that scatters destruction far and near, is the wave of discontent and lawlessness that is sweeping over the earth. We have long heard the distant rumblings of the threatened

storm. It is now on in full fury. And the end is not in sight. Some one has shouted "Fire," and the people are rushing madly to and fro, tearing at each other and trampling upon each other in the mad attempt to gain they know not what.

When a tempest rages at sea, when the waves sweep the deck of a ship and threaten to demolish its huge bulk, the calm demeanor of the captain, who quickly and authoritatively gives commands to right and left, reassures the passengers and loss of life is prevented.

In the theater or in the auditorium when the call of "Fire" is heard, one person who can command the situation and calmly give directions, will save the lives of all.

And so also in our turbulent times there is one to whom disaster, revolution, war and destruction are nothing new. She has witnessed the rise and fall of empires, the coming and going of nations, and she has always been an infallible guide to those in distress. This greatest of all leaders is the Church of God, the

Roman Catholic Church. She is not *of* the world, but she is *for* the world. Founded by God, and confirmed with the promise of perpetuity, she is not a guide that lives to-day and disappears to-morrow. Even her greatest enemies acknowledge the firmness and stability of her organization, although in our days nothing seems to be firm or stable.

Thanks to her leadership the Christian world has abolished slavery. Owing to her demands the condition of woman has been ameliorated, inasmuch as woman, who in pagan times was no more than the toy of her master, is now the queen of the home and respected by all. It was the Catholic Church that opened the first orphan asylum and homes for the poor and infirm. She is the Mother of learning and knowledge. For the greatest European universities are children of her solicitude and care, although they have proven disloyal to their mother.

In the Middle Ages there was no question of dissatisfaction among working people.

Neither were the owners of mines and the means of production able to amass fabulous sums of unearned wealth. For the Church was the patron of capital and labor, and under her protection both thrived and lived in harmony.

But can she heal the wounds of society to-day? Most assuredly she can. For, after all, what is the main ailment afflicting the world? Is it not the lack of religion? We are told that persons suffering from anæmia neither can be cured by medicines nor by treatments unless a healthy and sufficient flow of blood can be restored to the body. That is exactly the ailment of society. It is anæmic; religion is wanting. And we may apply plasters and ointments and deal out great doses of medicine—all will be futile unless we can restore the life-sustaining element of religion.

Therefore, the Catholic Church, the great leader, calls upon the nations to return to God and to His Holy Religion. The Most Rev. Patrick J. Hayes, D.D., in a letter to the people of New York, calls upon his flock to pray

and do penance in order that peace and stability may be restored. What the brilliant Archbishop asked of the people of New York, is but that which the Church asks of the people of the whole world.

God tells us through the prophetic words of Simeon, and history has verified the fact, that Christ "is set for the fall and resurrection of many." When the nations remained faithful to Him, they flourished and triumphed; and when they rejected Him, they were hurled down into the dust.

Let the nations, therefore, turn their eyes to God in their distress and tribulation. Let them disclaim the false leaders who have filled their libraries with books of atheism and radicalism and their hearts with passion and infidelity. Let them reject the false prophets who have sought to tear down God's Church and substitute a church erected by their own hands. In a word, let the nations of the world fulfill the prophecy of one shepherd and one sheepfold.

The Catholic Church is not a blind leader. She does not rely upon the sagacity and intelligence of her bishops and priests. But she depends solely upon the assistance of God, the protection of the Holy Spirit. This assistance and protection has been assured her by God Himself.

Another hundred years, and the modern religions, if they still exist, will not dare call themselves Christian. For at the present rate of disintegration, there will be very little, if anything, left to them of the faith preached by Christ.

But after one hundred years, the Catholic Church will be the same as she is to-day, the same as she was at the time of the Reformation, the same as when the apostles preached the first sermons, unchanged and unchangeable, the greatest Leader of all.

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Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Jan. 2006

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